This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

NEWSELLES

LIBRARY.

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES,

IN

VERSE AND PROSE.

By Several Hands.

THE THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed for J. DODSLEY, at Tully's Head, in Pall-Mall.

M.DCC.LXX.

THE NEW YORK
LIBRARY
TIL
X AND
TIONS.

CONTENTS.

POEMS.

	Page
THE Art of Dancing. — —	3
An Epiſtle to Lord Lovelace — —	27
An Eſſay on Virtue — — —	37
The Modern Fine Gentleman — —	47
The Modern Fine Lady — — —	55
Horace, Epiſt. I. Lib. II. imitated — —	64
To the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Cheſterfield, on his being inſtalled Knight of the Garter —	90
To a Lady in Town, ſoon after her leaving the Country	91
To a Lady. Sent with a preſent of Shells and Stones deſigned for a Grotto — —	95
To a Lady, in Anſwer to a Letter wrote in a very fine Hand — — —	97
To the Right Hon. the Lady Margaret Cavendiſh Harley, preſented with a Collection of Poems	99
Horace, Lib. II. Od. XVI. imitated —	101
Horace, Lib. IV. Od. VIII. imitated —	108
To the Hon. Miſs Yorke, on her Marriage to Lord Anſon — — —	114
Chloe to Strephon; a Song — —	115

CONTENTS.

Page

A Song — — — — 116

A Song — — — — 117

The Choice — — — 118

To a young Lady, going to the Weſt-Indies 120

Chloe Angling. — — — 122

Chloe Hunting — — — 124

On Lucinda's Recovery from the Small-Pox — 125

Written in Mr. Locke's Eſſay on Human Underſtanding — — — 127

Written in a Lady's Volume of Tragedies — 128

Cupid reliev'd — — — *ibid.*

The Way to be Wiſe — — 129

The Snow-ball. From Petronius Afranius — 130

Anacreon, Ode XX. — — — 131

A Tranſlation of ſome Latin Verſes on the Camera Obſcura — — — 132

The Temple of Venus — — 135

On a Noſegay in the Counteſs of Coventry's Breaſt. In Imitation of Waller — — 137

The 'Squire and the Parſon; an Eclogue — 138

On the Immortality of the Soul. Tranſlated from the Latin of Iſaac Hawkins Browne, Eſq; 143

PIECES, RELIGIOUS, MORAL, and METAPHYSICAL.

Five Eſſays publiſhed in a Weekly Paper, called The World — — — 181

CONTENTS.

Page

A Free Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil; in Six Letters to ——— — — 221

Preface — — — 223

Letter I. On Evil in general — 243

Letter II. On Evils of Imperfection — 259

Letter III. On Natural Evils — 271

Letter IV. On Moral Evils — 293

Letter V. On Political Evils — 323

Letter VI. On Religious Evils — 341

Philoſophical Conſiderations on the Nature of Time 371

Reflections on ſeveral Subjects — — 393

POLITICAL TRACTS.

Short but ſerious Reaſons for a National Militia 409

Objections to the Taxation of our American Colonies, by the Legiſlature of Great-Britain, briefly conſidered — — — 421

Thoughts on the Cauſes and Conſequences of the High Price of Proviſions — — 435

POEMS.

CONTENTS

POEMS.

THE

ART of DANCING.

A

POEM.

Inceſſu patuit Dea. VIRG.

Written in the Year 1730.

THE

ART of DANCING.

A

POEM.

INSCRIBED TO

The Rt. Hon. the Lady FANNY FIELDING.

CANTO I.

IN the ſmooth dance to move with graceful mien,
Eaſy with care, and ſprightly tho' ſerene,
To mark th' inſtructions echoing ſtrains convey,
And with juſt ſteps each tuneful note obey,
I teach; be preſent, all ye ſacred Choir,
Blow the ſoft flute, and ſtrike the ſounding lyre:
When FIELDING bids, your kind aſſiſtance bring,
And at her feet the lowly tribute fling;
Oh may her eyes (to her this verſe is due)
What firſt themſelves inſpir'd, vouchſafe to view!

Hail loveliеſt art! that can'ſt all hearts inſnare,
And make the faireſt ſtill appear more fair.

Beauty can little execution do,
Unleſs ſhe borrows half her arms from you;
Few, like PYGMALION, doat on lifeleſs charms,
Or care to claſp a ſtatue in their arms;
But breaſts of flint muſt melt with fierce deſire,
When art and motion wake the ſleeping fire:
A VENUS drawn by great Apelles' hand,
May for a while our wond'ring eyes command,
But ſtill, tho' form'd with all the pow'rs of art,
The lifeleſs piece can never warm the heart;
So a fair nymph, perhaps, may pleaſe the eye,
Whilſt all her beauteous limbs unactive lie,
But when her charms are in the dance diſplay'd,
Then ev'ry heart adores the lovely maid:
This ſets her beauty in the faireſt light,
And ſhews each grace in full perfection bright;
Then, as ſhe turns around, from ev'ry part,
Like porcupines, ſhe ſends a piercing dart;
In vain, alas! the fond ſpectator tries
To ſhun the pleaſing dangers of her eyes,
For, PARTHIAN like, ſhe wounds as ſure behind,
With flowing curls, and ivory neck reclin'd:
Whether her ſteps the Minuet's mazes trace,
Or the ſlow Louvre's more majeſtic pace,
Whether the Rigadoon employs her care,
Or ſprightly Jigg diſplays the nimble fair,
At every ſtep new beauties we explore,
And worſhip now, what we admir'd before:
So when ÆNEAS in the TYRIAN grove,
Fair VENUS met, the charming queen of Love,

The

The beauteous Goddeſs, whilſt unmov'd ſhe ſtood,
Seem'd ſome fair nymph, the guardian of the wood,
But when ſhe mov'd, at once her heav'nly mien,
And graceful ſtep confeſs bright Beauty's queen,
New glories o'er her form each moment riſe,
And all the Goddeſs opens to his eyes.

Now haſte, my Muſe, purſue thy deſtin'd way,
What dreſſes beſt become the dancer, ſay,
The rules of dreſs forget not to impart,
A leſſon previous to the dancing art.

The ſoldier's ſcarlet glowing from afar,
Shews that his bloody occupation's war;
Whilſt the lawn band, beneath a double chin,
As plainly ſpeaks divinity within;
The milk-maid ſafe thro' driving rains and ſnows,
Wrapp'd in her cloak, and prop'd on pattens goes;
While the ſoft Belle immur'd in velvet chair,
Needs but the ſilken ſhoe, and truſts her boſom bare:
The woolly drab, and Engliſh broad-cloth warm,
Guard well the horſeman from the beating ſtorm,
But load the dancer with too great a weight,
And call from ev'ry pore the dewy ſweat;
Rather let him his active limbs diſplay
In camblet thin, or gloſſy paduaſoy,
Let no unweildy pride his ſhoulders preſs,
But airy, light, and eaſy be his dreſs;
Thin be his yielding ſole, and low his heel,
So ſhall he nimbly bound, and ſafely wheel.

But let not precepts known my verſe prolong,
Precepts which uſe will better teach than ſong;
For why ſhould I the gallant ſpark command,
With clean white gloves to fit his ready hand?
Or in his fobb enlivening ſpirits wear,
And pungent ſalts to raiſe the fainting fair?
Or hint, the ſword that dangles at his ſide,
Should from its ſilken bondage be unty'd?
Why ſhould my lays the youthful tribe adviſe,
Leſt ſnowy clouds from out their wigs ariſe:
So ſhall their partners mourn their laces ſpoil'd,
And ſhining ſilks with greaſy powder ſoil'd?
Nor need I, ſure, bid prudent youths beware,
Leſt with erected tongues their buckles ſtare,
The pointed ſteel ſhall oft their ſtockings rend,
And oft th' approaching petticoat offend.

And now, ye youthful fair, I ſing to you,
With pleaſing ſmiles my uſeful labours view;
For you the ſilk-worms fine-wrought webs diſplay,
And lab'ring ſpin their little lives away,
For you bright gems with radiant colours glow,
Fair as the dies that paint the heav'nly bow,
For you the ſea reſigns it's pearly ſtore,
And earth unlocks her mines of treaſur'd ore;
In vain yet nature thus her gifts beſtows,
Unleſs yourſelves with art thoſe gifts diſpoſe.

Yet think not, Nymphs, that in the glitt'ring ball,
One form of dreſs preſcrib'd can ſuit with all;

One

One brighteſt ſhines, when wealth and art combine,
To make the finiſh'd piece compleatly fine;
When leaſt adorn'd, another ſteals our hearts,
And rich in native beauties, wants not arts.
In ſome are ſuch reſiſtleſs graces found,
That in all dreſſes they are ſure to wound;
Their perfect forms all foreign aids deſpiſe,
And gems but borrow luſtre from their eyes.

Let the fair nymph in whoſe plump cheeks is ſeen
A conſtant bluſh, be clad in chearful green;
In ſuch a dreſs the ſportive ſea-nymphs go,
So in their graſſy bed freſh roſes blow:
The laſs whoſe ſkin is like the hazel brown,
With brighter yellow ſhould o'ercome her own;
While maids grown pale with ſickneſs or deſpair,
The ſable's mournful dye ſhould chuſe to wear;
So the pale moon ſtill ſhines with pureſt light,
Cloath'd in the duſky mantle of the night.

But far from you be all thoſe treach'rous arts,
That wound with painted charms unwary hearts;
Dancing's a touchſtone that true beauty tries,
Nor ſuffers charms that nature's hand denies:
Tho' for a while we may with wonder view
The roſy bluſh, and ſkin of lovely hue,
Yet ſoon the dance will cauſe the cheeks to glow,
And melt the waxen lips, and neck of ſnow:
So ſhine the fields in icy fetters bound,
Whilſt frozen gems beſpangle all the ground;

Thro' the clear cryſtal of the glitt'ring ſnow,
With ſcarlet dye the bluſhing hawthorns glow;
O'er all the plains unnumber'd glories riſe,
And a new bright creation charms our eyes;
Till ZEPHYR breathes, then all at once decay
The ſplendid ſcenes, their glories fade away,
The fields reſign the beauties not their own,
And all their ſnowy charms run trickling down.

Dare I in ſuch momentous points adviſe,
I ſhould condemn the hoop's enormous ſize:
Of ills I ſpeak by long experience found,
Oft' have I trod th' immeaſurable round,
And mourn'd my ſhins bruis'd black with many a wound.
Nor ſhould the tighten'd ſtays, too ſtraitly lac'd,
In whale-bone bondage gall the ſlender waiſt;
Nor waving lappets ſhou'd the dancing fair,
Nor ruffles edg'd with dangling fringes wear;
Oft will the cobweb ornaments catch hold
On the approaching button rough with gold,
Nor force, nor art can then the bonds divide,
When once th' intangled Gordian knot is ty'd.
So the unhappy pair, by HYMEN's power,
Together join'd in ſome ill-fated hour,
The more they ſtrive their freedom to regain,
The faſter binds th' indiſſoluble chain.

Let each fair maid, who fears to be diſgrac'd,
Ever be ſure to tye her garters faſt,

Leſt

Leſt the loos'd ſtring, amidſt the public ball,
A wiſh'd for prize to ſome proud fop ſhould fall,
Who the rich treaſure ſhall triumphant ſhew;
And with warm bluſhes cauſe her cheeks to glow.

But yet, (as Fortune by the ſelf-ſame ways
She humbles many, ſome delights to raiſe)
It happen'd once, a fair illuſtrious dame
By ſuch neglect acquired immortal fame.
And hence the radiant Star and Garter blue
BRITANNIA's nobles grace, if fame ſays true:
Hence ſtill, PLANTAGENET, thy beauties bloom,
Tho' long ſince moulder'd in the duſky tomb,
Still thy loſt Garter is thy ſovereign's care,
And what each royal breaſt is proud to wear.

But let me now my lovely charge remind;
Leſt they forgetful leave their fans behind;
Lay not, ye fair, the pretty toy aſide,
A toy at once diſplay'd, for uſe and pride,
A wond'rous engine, that by magic charms,
Cools your own breaſts, and ev'ry other's warms.
What daring bard ſhall e'er attempt to tell
The pow'rs that in this little weapon dwell?
What verſe can e'er explain its various parts,
Its num'rous uſes, motions, charms and arts?
Its painted folds, that oft extended wide,
Th'afflicted fair one's blubber'd beauties hide,
When ſecret ſorrows her ſad boſom fill,
If STREPHON is unkind, or SHOCK is ill:

Its

Its ſticks, on which her eyes dejected pore,
And pointing fingers number o'er and o'er,
When the kind virgin burns with ſecret ſhame,
Dies to conſent, yet fears to own her flame;
Its ſhake triumphant, its victorious clap,
Its angry flutter, and its wanton rap?

Forbear, my muſe, th' extenſive theme to ſing,
Nor truſt in ſuch a flight thy tender wing;
Rather do you in humble lines proclaim,
From whence this engine took its form and name,
Say from what cauſe it firſt deriv'd its birth,
How form'd in heav'n, how thence deduc'd to earth.

Once in ARCADIA, that fam'd ſeat of love,
There liv'd a nymph the pride of all the grove,
A lovely nymph, adorn'd with ev'ry grace,
An eaſy ſhape, and ſweetly-blooming face;
FANNY, the damſel's name, as chaſte as fair,
Each virgin's envy, and each ſwain's deſpair;
To charm her ear the rival ſhepherds ſing,
Blow the ſoft flute, and wake the trembling ſtring,
For her they leave their wand'ring flocks to rove,
Whilſt FANNY's name reſounds thro' ev'ry grove,
And ſpreads on ev'ry tree, incloſ'd in knots of love,
As FIELDING's now, her eyes all hearts inflame,
Like her in beauty, as alike in name.

'Twas when the ſummer ſun now mounted high,
With fiercer beams had ſcorch'd the glowing ſky,

Beneath the covert of a cooling ſhade,
To ſhun the heat, this lovely nymph was laid;
The ſultry weather o'er her cheeks had ſpread
A bluſh, that added to their native red,
And her fair breaſt as poliſh'd marble white,
Was half conceal'd, and half expos'd to ſight:
Æolus the mighty God, whom winds obey,
Obſerv'd the beauteous maid, as thus ſhe lay;
O'er all her charms he gaz'd with fond delight,
And ſuck'd in poiſon at the dangerous ſight;
He ſighs, he burns; at laſt declares his pain,
But ſtill he ſighs, and ſtill he wooes in vain;
The cruel nymph, regardleſs of his moan,
Minds not his flame, uneaſy with her own;
But ſtill complains, that he who rul'd the air
Would not command one ZEPHYR to repair
Around her face, nor gentle breeze to play
Thro' the dark glade, to cool the ſultry day;
By love incited, and the hopes of joy,
Th' ingenious God contriv'd this pretty toy,
With gales inceſſant to relieve her flame;
And call'd it FAN, from lovely FANNY's name.

CANTO II.

NOW ſee prepar'd to lead the ſprightly dance,
The lovely nymphs, and well-dreſs'd youths advance;
The ſpacious room receives its jovial gueſt,
And the floor ſhakes with pleaſing weight oppreſt:
Thick rang'd on ev'ry ſide, with various dyes
The fair in gloſſy ſilks our ſight ſurprize;
So, in a garden bath'd with genial ſhow'rs,
A thouſand ſorts of variegated flow'rs,
Jonquills, carnations, pinks, and tulips riſe,
And in a gay confuſion charm our eyes.
High o'er their heads, with num'rous candles bright,
Large ſconces ſhed their ſparkling beams of light,
Their ſparkling beams, that ſtill more brightly glow,
Reflected back from gems, and eyes below:
Unnumber'd fans to cool the crowded fair,
With breathing ZEPHYRS move the circling air;
The ſprightly fiddle, and the ſounding lyre,
Each youthful breaſt with gen'rous warmth inſpire;
Fraught with all joys the bliſsful moments fly,
Whilſt muſic melts the ear, and beauty charms the eye.

Now let the youth, to whoſe ſuperior place
It firſt belongs the ſplendid ball to grace,

With humble bow, and ready hand prepare,
Forth from the crowd to lead his choſen fair;
The fair ſhall not his kind requeſt deny,
But to the pleaſing toil with equal ardour fly.

But ſtay, raſh pair, nor yet untaught advance,
Firſt hear the muſe, ere you attempt to dance:
* By art directed o'er the foaming tide,
Secure from rocks the painted veſſels glide;
By art the chariot ſcours the duſty plain,
Springs at the whip, and † hears the ſtrait'ning rein;
To art our bodies muſt obedient prove,
If e'er we hope with graceful eaſe to move.

Long was the dancing art unfixt, and free,
Hence loſt in error, and uncertainty;
No precepts did it mind, or rules obey,
But ev'ry maſter taught a different way;
Hence ere each new-born dance was fully try'd,
The lovely product ev'n in blooming dy'd;
Thro' various hands in wild confuſion toſt,
Its ſteps were alter'd, and its beauties loſt;
Till ‡ FUILLET, the pride of GALLIA, roſe,
And did the dance in characters compoſe;
Each lovely grace by certain marks he taught,
And ev'ry ſtep in laſting volumes wrote:

* Arte citæ veloque rates remoque moventur,
Arte leves currus. OVID.

† ——Nec audit currus habenas. VIRG.

‡ Fuillet wrote the Art of Dancing by Characters, in French, ſince tranſlated by Weaver.

Hence

Hence o'er the world this pleaſing art ſhall ſpread,
And ev'ry dance in ev'ry clime be read,
By diſtant maſters ſhall each ſtep be ſeen,
Tho' mountains riſe, and oceans roar between;
Hence with her ſiſter arts, ſhall dancing claim
An equal right to univerſal fame;
And ISAAC's rigadoon ſhall live as long,
As RAPHAEL's painting, or as VIRGIL's ſong.

Wiſe Nature ever, with a prudent hand,
Diſpenſes various gifts to ev'ry land;
To ev'ry nation frugally imparts,
A genius fit for ſome peculiar arts;
To trade the DUTCH incline, the SWISS to arms,
Muſic and verſe are ſoft ITALIA's charms;
BRITANNIA juſtly glories to have found
Lands unexplor'd, and ſail'd the globe around;
But none will ſure preſume to rival FRANCE,
Whether ſhe forms, or executes the dance;
To her exalted genius 'tis we owe
The ſprightly Rigadoon and Louvre flow,
The Borée, and Courant unpractis'd long,
Th' immortal Minuet, and ſmooth Bretagne,
With all thoſe dances of illuſtrious fame,
* Which from their native country take their name;
With theſe let ev'ry ball be firſt begun,
Nor country dance intrude till theſe are done.

* French Dances.

Each

Each cautious bard, ere he attempts to ſing,
Firſt gently flutt'ring tries his tender wing;
And if he finds that with uncommon fire
The Muſes all his raptur'd ſoul inſpire,
At once to heav'n he ſoars in lofty odes,
And ſings alone of heroes and of gods;
But if he trembling fears a flight ſo high,
He then deſcends to ſofter elegy;
And if in elegy he can't ſucceed,
In paſtoral he ſtill may tune the oaten reed:
So ſhould the dancer, ere he tries to move,
With care his ſtrength, his weight and genius prove;
Then, if he finds kind Nature's gifts impart
Endowments proper for the dancing art,
If in himſelf he feels together join'd,
An active body and ambitious mind,
In nimble Rigadoons he may advance,
Or in the Louvre's ſlow majeſtic dance;
If theſe he fears to reach, with eaſy pace
Let him the Minuet's circling mazes trace:
Is this too hard? this too let him forbear,
And to the country dance confine his care.

Would you in dancing ev'ry fault avoid,
To keep true time be firſt your thoughts employ'd;
All other errors they in vain ſhall mend,
Who in this one important point offend;
For this, when now united hand in hand
Eager to ſtart the youthful couple ſtand,

Let

Let them a while their nimble feet reſtrain,
And with ſoft taps beat time to ev'ry ſtrain:
So for the race prepar'd two courſers ſtand,
And with impatient pawings ſpurn the ſand.

In vain a maſter ſhall employ his care,
Where nature has once fix'd a clumſy air;
Rather let ſuch to country ſports confin'd,
Purſue the flying hare or tim'rous hind:
Nor yet, while I the rural 'ſquire deſpiſe,
A mien effeminate would I adviſe:
With equal ſcorn I would the fop deride,
Nor let him dance,——but on the woman's ſide.

And you, fair nymphs, avoid with equal care,
A ſtupid dullneſs, and a coquet air;
Neither with eyes, that ever love the ground,
Aſleep, like ſpinning tops, run round and round,
Nor yet with giddy looks and wanton pride,
Stare all around, and ſkip from ſide to ſide.

True dancing, like true wit, is beſt expreſt
By nature only to advantage dreſt;
'Tis not a nimble bound, or caper high,
That can pretend to pleaſe a curious eye,
Good judges no ſuch tumblers tricks regard,
Or think them beautiful, becauſe they're hard.

'Tis not enough that ev'ry ſtander-by
No glaring errors in your ſteps can ſpy,

The dance and muſic muſt ſo nicely meet,
Each note ſhould ſeem an echo to her feet;
A nameleſs grace muſt in each movement dwell,
Which words can ne'er expreſs, or precepts tell,
Not to be taught, but ever to be ſeen
In FLAVIA's air, and CHLOE's eaſy mien;
'Tis ſuch an air that makes her thouſands fall,
When FIELDING dances at a birthnight ball;
Smooth as CAMILLA ſhe ſkims o'er the plain,
And flies like her thro' crowds of heroes ſlain.

Now when the Minuet oft repeated o'er,
(Like all terreſtrial joys) can pleaſe no more,
And ev'ry nymph, refuſing to expand
Her charms, declines the circulating hand;
Then let the jovial Country-dance begin,
And the loud fiddles call each ſtraggler in:
But ere they come, permit me to diſcloſe,
How firſt, as legends tell, this paſtime roſe.

In ancient times (ſuch times are now no more)
When ALBION's crown illuſtrious ARTHUR wore,
In ſome fair op'ning glade, each ſummer's night,
Where the pale moon diffus'd her ſilver light,
On the ſoft carpet of a graſſy field,
The ſporting Fairies their aſſemblies held:
Some lightly tripping with their pigmy queen,
In circling ringlets mark'd the level green,
Some with ſoft notes bade mellow pipes reſound,
And muſic warble thro' the groves around;

Oft lonely ſhepherds by the foreſt ſide,
Belated peaſants oft their revels ſpy'd,
And home returning o'er their nut-brown ale,
Their gueſts diverted with the wond'rous tale.
Inſtructed hence, throughout the Britiſh iſle,
And fond to imitate the pleaſing toil,
Round where the trembling may-pole fix'd on high,
Uplifts its flow'ry honours to the ſky,
The ruddy maids, and ſun-burnt ſwains reſort,
And practiſe ev'ry night the lovely ſport;
On ev'ry ſide Æolian artiſts ſtand,
Whoſe active elbows ſwelling winds command,
The ſwelling winds harmonious pipes inſpire,
And blow in ev'ry breaſt a gen'rous fire.

Thus taught, at firſt the Country-dance began,
And hence to cities and to courts it ran;
Succeeding ages did in time impart
Various improvements to the lovely art;
From fields and groves to palaces remov'd,
Great ones the pleaſing exerciſe approv'd:
Hence the loud fiddle, and ſhrill trumpet's ſounds,
Are made companions of the dancer's bounds;
Hence gems, and ſilks, brocades, and ribbons join,
To make the ball with perfect luſtre ſhine.

So rude at firſt the Tragic muſe appear'd,
Her voice alone by ruſtic rabble heard,
Where twiſting trees a cooling arbour made,
The pleas'd ſpectators ſat beneath the ſhade;

The

The homely ſtage with ruſhes green was ſtrew'd,
And in a cart the ſtrolling actors rode:
Till time at length improv'd the great deſign,
And bade the ſcenes with painted landſkips ſhine;
Then art did all the bright machines diſpoſe,
And theatres of Parian marble roſe,
Then mimic thunder ſhook the canvas ſky,
And Gods deſcended from their tow'rs on high.

With caution how let ev'ry youth prepare
To chuſe a partner from the mingled fair;
Fain wou'd be here th' inſtructing Muſe's voice,
If ſhe pretended to direct his choice:
Beauty alone by fancy is expreſt,
And charms in diff'rent forms each diff'rent breaſt;
A ſnowy ſkin this am'rous youth admires,
Whilſt nut-brown cheeks another's boſom fires,
Small waiſts, and ſlender limbs ſome hearts inſnare,
Whilſt others love the more ſubſtantial fair.

But let not outward charms your judgment ſway,
Your reaſon rather than your eyes obey,
And in the dance as in the marriage nooſe,
Rather for merit, than for beauty, chooſe:
Be her your choice, who knows with perfect ſkill
When ſhe ſhould move, and when ſhe ſhould be ſtill,
Who uninſtructed can perform her ſhare,
And kindly half the pleaſing burthen bear.
Unhappy is that hopeleſs wretch's fate,
Who fetter'd in the matrimonial ſtate

With a poor, ſimple, unexperienc'd wife,
Is forc'd to lead the tedious dance of life;
And ſuch is his, with ſuch a partner join'd,
A moving puppet, but without a mind:
Still muſt his hand be pointing out the way,
Yet ne'er can teach ſo faſt as ſhe can ſtray;
Beneath her follies he muſt ever groan,
And ever bluſh for errors not his own.

But now behold united hand in hand,
Rang'd on each ſide, the well-pair'd couples ſtand!
Each youthful boſom beating with delight,
Waits the briſk ſignal for the pleaſing ſight;
While lovely eyes, that flaſh unuſual rays,
And ſnowy bubbies pull'd above the ſtays,
Quick buſy hands, and bridling heads declare
The fond impatience of the ſtarting fair.
And ſee, the ſprightly dance is now begun!
Now here, now there the giddy maze they run,
Now with ſlow ſteps they pace the circling ring,
Now all confus'd, too ſwift for ſight they ſpring:
So, in a wheel with rapid fury toſt,
The undiſtinguiſh'd ſpokes are in the motion loſt.

The dancer here no more requires a Guide,
To no ſtrict ſteps his nimble feet are ty'd,
The Muſe's precepts here would uſeleſs be,
Where all is fancy'd, unconfin'd, and free;
Let him but to the muſic's voice attend,
By this inſtructed he can ne'er offend;

If

If to his ſhare it falls the dance to lead,
In well-known paths he may be ſure to tread,
If others lead let him their motions view,
And in their ſteps the winding maze purſue.

In every Country-dance a ſerious mind,
Turn'd for reflection, can a moral find,
In Hunt-the-Squirrel thus the nymph we view,
Seeks when we fly, but flies when we purſue:
Thus in round-dances where our partners change,
And unconfin'd from fair to fair we range,
As ſoon as one from his own conſort flies,
Another ſeizes on the lovely prize;
A while the fav'rite youth enjoys her charms,
Till the next comer ſteals her from his arms,
New ones ſucceed, the laſt is ſtill her care;
How true an emblem of th' inconſiſtant fair!

Where can philoſophers, and ſages wiſe,
Who read the curious volumes of the ſkies,
A model more exact than dancing name
Of the creation's univerſal frame?
Where world's unnumber'd o'er th' æthérial way,
In a bright regular confuſion ſtray;
Now here, now there they whirl along the ſky,
Now near approach, and now far diſtant fly,
Now meet in the ſame order they begun,
And then the great celeſtial dance is done.

Where can the Mor'liſt find a juſter plan
Of the vain labours, and the life of man;

A while thro' jostling crowds we toil, and sweat,
And eagerly pursue we know not what,
Then when our trifling short-liv'd race is run,
Quite tir'd sit down, just where we first begun.

Tho' to your arms kind fate's indulgent care
Has giv'n a partner exquisitely fair,
Let not her charms so much engage your heart,
That you neglect the skilful dancer's part;
Be not, when you the tuneful notes would hear,
Still whisp'ring idle prattle in her ear;
When you should be employ'd, be not at play,
Nor for your joys all other steps delay;
But when the finish'd dance you once have done,
And with applause thro' ev'ry couple run,
There rest a while; there snatch the fleeting bliss,
The tender whisper, and the balmy kiss;
Each secret wish, each softer hope confess,
And her moist palm with eager fingers press;
With smiles the fair shall hear your warm desires,
When music melts her soul, and dancing fires.

Thus mix'd with love, the pleasing toil pursue,
Till the unwelcome morn appears in view;
Then, when approaching day its beams displays,
And the dull candles shine with fainter rays,
Then, when the sun just rises o'er the deep;
And each bright eye is almost set in sleep,
With ready hand obsequious youths prepare
Safe to her coach to lead each chosen fair,
And guard her from the morn's inclement air:

Let

Let a warm hood enwrap her lovely head,
And o'er her neck a handkerchief be ſpread,
Around her ſhoulders let this arm be caſt,
Whilſt that from cold defends her tender waiſt;
With kiſſes warm her balmy lips ſhall glow,
Unchill'd by nightly damps or wintry ſnow,
While gen'rous white-wine, mull'd with ginger warm,
Safely protects her inward frame from harm.

But ever let my lovely pupils fear
To chill their mantling blood with cold ſmall-beer,
Ah, thoughtleſs fair! the tempting draught refuſe,
When thus fore-warn'd by my experienc'd muſe:
Let the ſad conſequence your thoughts employ,
Nor hazard future pains, for preſent joy;
Deſtruction lurks within the pois'nous doſe,
A fatal fever, or a pimpled noſe.

Thus thro' each precept of the dancing art
The muſe has play'd the kind inſtructor's part,
Thro' ev'ry maze her pupils ſhe has led,
And pointed out the ſureſt paths to tread;
No more remains; no more the goddeſs ſings,
But drops her pinions, and unfurls her wings;
On downy beds the weary'd dancers lie,
And ſleep's ſilk cords tye down each drowſy eye,
Delightful dreams their pleaſing ſports reſtore,
And ev'n in ſleep they ſeem to dance once more.

And now the work compleatly finiſh'd lies,
Which the devouring teeth of time defies;

Whilſt birds in air, or fiſh in ſtreams we find,
Or damſels fret with aged partners join'd;
As long as nymphs ſhall with attentive ear
A fiddle rather than a ſermon hear:
So long the brighteſt eyes ſhall oft peruſe
Theſe uſeful lines of my inſtructive muſe;
Each belle ſhall wear them wrote upon her fan,
And each bright beau ſhall read them—if he can.

AN

EPISTLE

TO

Lord LOVELACE.

AN

EPISTLE,

Written in the COUNTRY,

To the Right Hon. the Lord LOVELACE then in TOWN.

SEPTEMBER, 1735.

IN days, my Lord, when mother Time,
Tho' now grown old, was in her prime,
When SATURN firſt began to rule,
And JOVE was hardly come from ſchool,
How happy was a country life!
How free from wickedneſs and ſtrife!
Then each man liv'd upon his farm,
And thought and did no mortal harm;
On moſſy banks fair virgins ſlept;
As harmleſs as the flocks they kept;
Then love was all they had to do,
And nymphs were chaſte, and ſwains were true.

But now, whatever poets write,
'Tis ſure the caſe is alter'd quite,

Virtue

AN EPISTLE,

Written in the COUNTRY,

To the Right Hon. the Lord LOVELACE then in TOWN.

SEPTEMBER, 1735.

IN days, my Lord, when mother Time,
Tho' now grown old, was in her prime,
When SATURN firſt began to rule,
And JOVE was hardly come from ſchool,
How happy was a country life!
How free from wickedneſs and ſtrife!
Then each man liv'd upon his farm,
And thought and did no mortal harm;
On moſſy banks fair virgins ſlept;
As harmleſs as the flocks they kept;
Then love was all they had to do,
And nymphs were chaſte, and ſwains were true.

But now, whatever poets write,
'Tis ſure the caſe is alter'd quite,

Virtue

Virtue no more in rural plains,
Or innocence, or peace remains;
But vice is in the cottage found,
And country girls are oft unſound;
Fierce party rage each village fires,
With wars of juſtices and 'ſquires;
Attorneys, for a barley ſtraw,
Whole ages hamper folks in law,
And ev'ry neighbour's in a flame
About their rates, or tythes, or game:
Some quarrel for their hares and pigeons,
And ſome for diff'rence in religions:
Some hold their parſon the beſt preacher,
The tinker ſome a better teacher;
Theſe to the church they fight for ſtrangers,
Have faith in nothing but her dangers;
While thoſe a more believing people,
Can ſwallow all things —— but a ſteeple.

But I, my Lord, who, as you know,
Care little how theſe matters go,
And equally deteſt the ſtrife
And uſual joys of country life,
Have by good fortune little ſhare
Of its diverſions, or its care;
For ſeldom I with 'ſquires unite,
Who hunt all day and drink all night;
Nor reckon wonderful inviting,
A quarter ſeſſions, or cock-fighting;

But then no farm I occupy,
With ſheep to rot, and cows to die:
Nor rage I much or much deſpair,
Tho' in my hedge I find a ſnare;
Nor view I, with due admiration,
All the high honours here in faſhion;
The great commiſſions of the quorum,
Terrors to all who come before 'em;
Militia ſcarlet edg'd with gold,
Or the white ſtaff high ſheriffs hold;
The repreſentative's careſſing,
The judge's bow, the biſhop's bleſſing;
Nor can I for my ſoul delight
In the dull feaſt of neighb'ring knight,
Who, if you ſend three days before,
In white gloves meets you at the door,
With ſuperfluity of breeding
Firſt makes you ſick, and then with feeding:
Or if with ceremony cloy'd,
You wou'd next time ſuch plagues avoid,
And viſit without previous notice,
JOHN, JOHN, a coach!—I can't think who 'tis,
My lady cries, who ſpies your coach,
Ere you the avenue approach;
Lord, how unlucky!—waſhing day!
And all the men are in the hay!
Entrance to gain is ſomething hard,
The dogs all bark, the gates are barr'd;
The yard's with lines of linen croſs'd,
The hall door's lock'd, the key is loſt;

Theſe difficulties all o'ercome,
We reach at length the drawing room;
Then there's ſuch trampling over-head,
Madam you'd ſwear was brought to bed;
Miſs in a hurry burſts her lock,
To get clean ſleeves to hide her ſmock;
The ſervants run, the pewter clatters,
My lady dreſſes, calls and chatters;
The cook-maid raves for want of butter,
Pigs ſqueak, fowls ſcream, and green geeſe flutter.
Now after three hours tedious waiting,
On all our neighbours faults debating,
And having nine times view'd the garden,
In which there's nothing worth a farthing,
In comes my lady, and the pudden:
You will excuſe, ſir,—on a ſudden—
Then, that we may have four and four,
The bacon, fowls, and collyflow'r
Their ancient unity divide,
The top one graces, one each ſide;
And by and by, the ſecond courſe
Comes lagging like a diſtanc'd horſe;
A ſalver then to church and king,
The butler ſweats, the glaſſes ring;
The cloth remov'd, the toaſts go round,
Bawdy and politics abound;
And as the knight more tipſy waxes,
We damn all miniſters and taxes.
At laſt the ruddy ſun quite ſunk,
The coachman tolerably drunk,

Whirling o'er hillocks, ruts, and ſtones,
Enough to diſlocate one's bones,
We home return, a wond'rous token
Of Heaven's kind care, with limbs unbroken.
Afflict us not, ye Gods, tho' ſinners,
With many days like this, or dinners!

But if civilities thus teaze me,
Nor buſineſs, nor diverſions pleaſe me:
You'll aſk, my Lord, how time I ſpend?
I anſwer, with a book or friend:
The circulating hours dividing,
'Twixt reading, walking, eating, riding:
But books are ſtill my higheſt joy,
Theſe earlieſt pleaſe, and lateſt cloy.
Sometimes o'er diſtant climes I ſtray,
By guides experienc'd taught the way;
The wonders of each region view,
From frozen LAPLAND to PERU;
Bound o'er rough ſeas, and mountains bare,
Yet ne'er forſake my elbow chair.
Sometimes ſome fam'd hiſtorian's pen
Recalls paſt ages back again,
Where all I ſee, thro' ev'ry page,
Is but how men, with ſenſeleſs rage,
Each other rob, deſtroy, and burn,
To ſerve a prieſt's, or ſtateſman's turn;
Tho' loaded with a diff'rent aim,
Yet always aſſes much the ſame.

Sometimes

Sometimes I view with much delight,
Divines their holy game-cocks fight;
Here faith and works at variance ſet,
Strive hard who ſhall the vict'ry get;
Preſbytery and epiſcopacy
They fight ſo long, it would amaze ye:
Here free-will holds a fierce diſpute
With reprobation abſolute;
There ſenſe kicks tranſubſtantiation,
And reaſon pecks at revelation.
With learned NEWTON now I fly
O'er all the rolling orbs on high,
Viſit new worlds, and for a minute
This old one ſcorn, and all that's in it:
And now with lab'ring BOYLE I trace
Nature through ev'ry winding maze,
The latent qualities admire
Of vapours, water, air, and fire:
With pleaſing admiration ſee
Matter's ſurpriſing ſubtilty;
As how the ſmalleſt lamp diſplays,
For miles around, it's ſcatter'd rays;
Or how (the caſe ſtill more t' explain)
* A fart, that weighs not half a grain,
The atmoſphere will oft perfume
Of a whole ſpacious drawing room.

Sometimes I paſs a whole long day
In happy indolence away,

* See Boyle's Experiments.

In

In fondly meditating o'er
Paſt pleaſures, and in hoping more:
Or wander thro' the fields and woods,
And gardens bath'd in circling floods,
There blooming flowers with rapture view,
And ſparkling gems of morning dew,
Whence in my mind ideas riſe
Of CÆLIA's cheeks, and CHLOE's eyes.

'Tis thus, my Lord, I free from ſtrife
Spend an inglorious country life;
Theſe are the joys I ſtill purſue,
When abſent from the town and you;
Thus paſs long ſummer ſuns away,
Buſily idle, calmly gay:
Nor great, nor mean, nor rich, nor poor,
Not having much, nor wiſhing more;
Except that you, when weary grown
Of all the follies of the town,
And ſeeing, in all public places,
The ſame vain fops and painted faces,
Wou'd ſometimes kindly condeſcend
To viſit a dull country friend:
Here you'll be ever ſure to meet
A hearty welcome tho' no treat,
One who has nothing elſe to do,
But to divert himſelf and you:
A houſe, where quiet guards the door,
No rural wits ſmoak, drink, and roar,
Choice books, ſafe horſes, wholeſome liquor,
Clean girls, backgammon, and the vicar.

AN

ESSAY

ON

VIRTUE.

To the Hon. PHILIP YORKE, Eſq;

THOU, whom not honours, wealth, nor youth can ſpoil
With the leaſt vice of each luxuriant ſoil,
Say, YORKE, (for ſure, if any, thou canſt tell)
What Virtue is, who practiſe it ſo well;
Say, where inhabits this Sultana queen;
Prais'd and ador'd by all, but rarely ſeen:
By what ſure mark her eſſence can we trace,
When each religion, faction, age, and place
Sets up ſome fancy'd idol of its own,
A vain pretender to her ſacred throne?
In man too oft a well diſſembled part,
A ſelf-denying pride in woman's heart;
In ſynods faith, and in the fields of fame
Valour uſurps her honours, and her name,

Whoe'er their ſenſe of virtue wou'd expreſs,
'Tis ſtill by ſomething they themſelves poſſeſs.
Hence youth good-humour, frugal craft old-age,
Warm politicians term it party-rage,
True churchmen zeal right orthodox; and hence
Fools think it gravity, and wits pretence;
To conſtancy alone fond lovers join it,
And maids unaſk'd to chaſtity confine it.

But have we then no law beſides our will?
No juſt criterion fix'd to good and ill?
As well at noon we may obſtruct our ſight,
Then doubt if ſuch a thing exiſts as light;
For no leſs plain wou'd nature's law appear
As the meridian ſun unchang'd, and clear,
Wou'd we but ſearch for what we were deſign'd,
And for what end th' Almighty form'd mankind;
A rule of life we then ſhould plainly ſee,
For to purſue that end muſt virtue be.

Then what is that? not want of power, or fame,
Or worlds unnumber'd to applaud his name,
But a deſire his bleſſings to diffuſe,
And fear leaſt millions ſhou'd exiſtence loſe;
His goodneſs only cou'd his power employ,
And an eternal warmth to propagate his joy.

Hence ſoul and ſenſe diffus'd thro' ev'ry place,
Make happineſs as infinite as ſpace;

Thouſands

Thouſands of ſuns beyond each other blaze,
Orbs roll o'er orbs, and glow with mutual rays;
Each is a world, where form'd with wond'rous art,
Unnumber'd ſpecies live thro' ev'ry part:
In ev'ry tract of ocean, earth, and ſkies,
Myriads of creatures ſtill ſucceſſive riſe:
Scarce buds a leaf, or ſprings the vileſt weed,
But little flocks upon its verdure feed;
No fruit our palate courts, or flow'r our ſmell,
But on its fragrant boſom nations dwell,
All form'd with proper faculties to ſhare
The daily bounties of their Maker's care:
The great Creator from his heav'nly throne,
Pleas'd on the wide-expanded joy looks down,
And his eternal law is only this,
That all contribute to the general bliſs.

Nature ſo plain this primal law diſplays,
Each living creature ſees it, and obeys;
Each, form'd for all, promotes thro' private care
The public good, and juſtly taſtes its ſhare.
All underſtand their great Creator's will,
Strive to be happy, and in that fulfill;
Mankind excepted, lord of all beſide,
But only ſlave to folly, vice, and pride;
'Tis he that's deaf to this command alone,
Delights in others woe, and courts his own;
Racks and deſtroys with tort'ring ſteel and flame,
For lux'ry brutes, and man himſelf for fame;

Sets Superſtition high on Virtue's throne,
Then thinks his Maker's temper like his own;
Hence are his altars ſtain'd with reeking gore,
As if he cou'd atone for crimes by more:
Hence whilſt offended heav'n he ſtrives in vain
T'appeaſe by faſts and voluntary pain,
Ev'n in repenting he provokes again.

How eaſy is our yoke! how light our load!
Did we not ſtrive to mend the laws of God:
For his own ſake no duty he can aſk,
The common welfare is our only taſk:
For this ſole end his precepts, kind as juſt,
Forbid intemperance, murder, theft, and luſt,
With ev'ry act injurious to our own
Or others good, for ſuch are crimes alone:
For this are peace, love, charity enjoin'd,
With all that can ſecure and bleſs mankind.
Thus is the public ſafety Virtue's cauſe,
And happineſs the end of all her laws;
For ſuch by nature is the human frame,
Our duty and our int'reſt are the ſame.

But hold, cries out ſome Puritan divine,
Whoſe well-ſtuff'd cheeks with eaſe and plenty ſhine,
Is this to faſt, to mortify, refrain?
And work ſalvation out with fear and pain?
We own the rigid leſſons of their ſchools
Are widely diff'rent from theſe eaſy rules;

Virtue, with them, is only to abſtain
From all that nature aſks, and covet pain;
Pleaſure and vice are ever near a-kin,
And, if we thirſty, cold water is a ſin:
Heav'n's path is rough and intricate, they ſay,
Yet all are damn'd that trip, or miſs their way.
God is a Being cruel and ſevere,
And man a wretch, by his command plac'd here,
In ſun-ſhine for a while to take a turn,
Only to dry and make him fit to burn.

Miſtaken men, too piouſly ſevere!
Thro' craft miſleading, or miſled by fear;
How little they God's counſels comprehend,
Our univerſal parent, guardian, friend!
Who, forming by degrees to bliſs mankind,
This globe our ſportive nurſery aſſign'd,
Where for a while his fond paternal care
Feaſts us with ev'ry joy our ſtate can bear:
Each ſenſe, touch, taſte, and ſmell diſpenſe delights,
Muſic our hearing, beauty charms our ſight;
Trees, herbs, and flow'rs to us their ſpoils reſign,
Its pearl the rock preſents, its gold the mine;
Beaſts, fowl, and fiſh their daily tribute give
Of food and cloaths, and die that we may live:
Seaſons but change, new pleaſures to produce,
And elements contend to ſerve our uſe:
Love's gentle ſhafts, ambition's towring wings,
The pomps of ſenates, churches, courts, and kings,

All

All that our rev'rence, joy, or hope create,
Are the gay play-things of this infant ſtate.
Scarcely an ill to human life belongs,
But what our follies cauſe, or mutual wrongs;
Or if ſome ſtripes from providence we feel,
He ſtrikes with pity, and but wounds to heal;
Kindly perhaps ſometimes afflicts us here,
To guide our views to a ſublimer ſphere,
In more exalted joys to fix our taſte,
And wean us from delights that cannot laſt.
Our preſent good the eaſy taſk is made,
To earn ſuperior bliſs, when this ſhall fade;
For, ſoon as e'er theſe mortal pleaſures cloy,
His hand ſhall lead us to ſublimer joy:
Snatch us from all our little ſorrows here,
Calm ev'ry grief, and dry each childiſh tear;
Waft us to regions of eternal peace,
Where bliſs and virtue grow with like increaſe;
From ſtrength to ſtrength our ſouls for ever guide,
Thro' wondrous ſcenes of Being yet untry'd,
Where in each ſtage we ſhall more perfect grow,
And new perfections, new delights beſtow.

Oh! would mankind but make theſe truths their guide,
And force the helm from prejudice and pride,
Were once theſe maxims fix'd, that God's our friend,
Virtue our good, and happineſs our end,
How ſoon muſt reaſon o'er the world prevail,
And error, fraud, and ſuperſtition fail!

None wou'd hereafter then with groundleſs fear,
Deſcribe th' Almighty cruel and ſevere,
Predeſtinating ſome without pretence
To Heav'n, and ſome to Hell for no offence;
Inflicting endleſs pains for tranſient crimes,
And favouring ſects or nations, men or times.
To pleaſe him none would fooliſhly forbear
Or food, or reſt, or itch in ſhirts of hair,
Or deem it merit to believe or teach
What reaſon contradicts, or cannot reach *;
None would fierce zeal for piety miſtake,
Or malice for whatever tenets ſake,
Or think ſalvation to one ſect confin'd,
And Heav'n too narrow to contain mankind.

No more then nymphs, by long neglect grown nice,
Wou'd in one female frailty ſum up vice,
And cenſure thoſe, who nearer to the right,
Think virtue is but to diſpenſe delight †.

No ſervile tenets would admittance find,
Deſtructive of the rights of human kind;
Of power divine, hereditary right,
And non-reſiſtance to a tyrant's might:

* It is apprehended, that genuine Chriſtianity requires not the belief of any ſuch propoſitions.

† Theſe lines mean only, that Cenſoriouſneſs is a vice more odious than Unchaſtity; this always proceeding from malevolence, that ſometimes from too much good-nature and compliance.

For

For ſure that all ſhou'd thus for one be curs'd,
Is but great nature's edict juſt revers'd.

No moraliſts then righteous to exceſs,
Wou'd ſhew fair Virtue in ſo black a dreſs,
That they, like boys, who ſome feign'd ſpright array,
Firſt from the ſpectre fly themſelves away:
No preachers in the terrible delight,
But chuſe to win by reaſon, not affright;
Not, conjurers like, in fire and brimſtone dwell,
And draw each moving argument from hell.

No more our ſage interpreters of laws,
Wou'd fatten on obſcurities, and flaws,
But rather nobly careful of their truſt,
Strive to wipe off the long contracted duſt,
And be, like HARDWICKE, guardians of the juſt.

No more applauſe would on ambition wait,
And laying waſte the world be counted great,
But one good-natur'd act more praiſes gain,
Than armies overthrown, and thouſands ſlain;
No more would brutal rage diſturb our peace,
But envy, hatred, war, and diſcord ceaſe;
Our own and other's good each hour employ,
And all things ſmile with univerſal joy;
Virtue with Happineſs her conſort join'd,
Wou'd regulate and bleſs each human mind,
And man be what his Maker firſt deſign'd.

THE

THE

MODERN

FINE GENTLEMAN.

Written in the Year 1746.

Quale Portentum neque militaris
Daunia in latis alit esculetis,
Nec Jubæ tellus generat, leonum
Arida nutrix.

THE

MODERN

FINE GENTLEMAN,

JUST broke from School, pert, impudent, and raw,
Expert in Latin, more expert in taw,
His honour poſts o'er ITALY and FRANCE,
Meaſures St. PETER's dome, and learns to dance.
Thence, having quick thro' various countries flown,
Glean'd all their follies and expos'd his own,
He back returns, a thing ſo ſtrange all o'er,
As never ages paſt produc'd before:
A monſter of ſuch complicated worth,
As no one ſingle clime cou'd e'er bring forth:
Half atheiſt, papiſt, gameſter, bubble, rook,
Half fidler, coachman, dancer, groom, and cook.

Next, becauſe bus'neſs is now all the vogue,
And who'd be quite polite muſt be a rogue,
In parliament he purchaſes a ſeat,
To make th' accompliſh'd Gentleman compleat.

There

There ſafe in ſelf-ſufficient impudence,
Without experience, honeſty, or ſenſe,
Unknowing in her int'reſt, trade, or laws,
He vainly undertakes his country's cauſe:
Forth from his lips, prepar'd at all to rail,
Torrents of nonſenſe burſt, like bottled ale,
* Tho' ſhallow, muddy; briſk tho' mighty dull;
Fierce without ſtrength; o'erflowing, tho' not full.

Now quite a Frenchman in his garb and air,
His neck yok'd down with bag and ſolitaire,
The liberties of BRITAIN he ſupports,
And ſtorms at place-men, miniſters, and courts;
Now in cropt greaſy hair, and leather breeches,
He loudly bellows out his patriot ſpeeches;
King, lords, and commons ventures to abuſe,
Yet dares to ſhew thoſe ears, he ought to loſe.
From hence to WHITE's our virtuous CATO flies,
There ſits with countenance erect and wiſe,
And talks of games of whiſt, and pig-tail pies.
Plays all the night, nor doubts each law to break,
Himſelf unknowingly has help'd to make;
Trembling and anxious, ſtakes his utmoſt groat,
Peeps o'er his cards, and looks as if he thought.
Next morn diſowns the loſſes of the night,
Becauſe the fool would fain be thought a bite.

* Parody on theſe lines of Sir John Denham.

Tho' deep, yet clear, tho' gentle yet not dull,
Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full.

Devoted

Devoted thus to politics, and cards,
Nor mirth, nor wine, nor women, he regards,
So far is ev'ry virtue from his heart,
That not a gen'rous vice can claim a part;
Nay, leſt one human paſſion e'er ſhould move
His ſoul to friendſhip, tenderneſs, or love,
To FIGG and BROUGHTON he commits his breaſt,
To ſteel it to the faſhionable teſt.

Thus poor in wealth, he labours to no end,
Wretched alone, in crowds without a friend;
Inſenſible to all that's good or kind,
Deaf to all merit, to all beauty blind;
For love too buſy, and for wit too grave,
A harden'd, ſober, proud, luxurious knave;
By little actions ſtriving to be great,
And proud to be, and to be thought a cheat.

And yet in this ſo bad is his ſucceſs,
That as his fame improves, his rents grow leſs;
On parchment wings his acres take their flight,
And his unpeopled groves admit the light;
With his eſtate his int'reſt too is done,
His honeſt borough ſeeks a warmer ſun;
For him, now caſh and liquor flows no more,
His independent voters ceaſe to roar:
And BRITAIN ſoon muſt want the great defence
Of all his honeſty, and eloquence,

But that the gen'rous youth more anxious grown
For public liberty, than for his own,
Marries ſome jointur'd antiquated crone:
And boldly, when his country is at ſtake,
Braves the deep yawning gulph, like CURTIUS, for
its ſake.

Quickly again diſtreſs'd for want of coin,
He digs no longer in th' exhauſted mine,
But ſeeks preferment, as the laſt reſort,
Cringes each morn at levées, bows at court,
And, from the hand he hates, implores ſupport:
The miniſter, well pleas'd at ſmall expence
To ſilence ſo much rude impertinence,
With ſqueeze and whiſper yields to his demands,
And on the venal liſt enroll'd he ſtands;
A ribband and a penſion buy the ſlave,
This bribes the fool about him, that the knave.
And now arriv'd at his meridian glory,
He ſinks apace, deſpis'd by Whig and Tory;
Of independence now he talks no more,
Nor ſhakes the Senate with his patriot roar,
But ſilent votes, and with court-trappings hung,
Eyes his own glitt'ring ſtar, and holds his tongue.
In craft political a Bankrupt made,
He ſticks to gaming, as the ſurer trade;
Turns downright ſharper, lives by ſucking blood,
And grows, in ſhort, the very thing he wou'd:
Hunts out young heirs, who have their fortunes ſpent,
And lends them ready caſh at cent per cent,

Lays wagers on his own, and others lives,
Fights uncles, fathers, grandmothers, and wives,
Till death at length indignant to be made
The daily ſubject of his ſport and trade,
Veils with his ſable hand the wretch's eyes,
And, groaning for the betts he loſes by't, he dies.

THE

MODERN

FINE LADY.

———*Miseri quibus*
Intentata nites. HOR.

Written in the Year 1750.

THE

MODERN FINE LADY.

SKILL'D in each art, that can adorn the fair,
The ſprightly dance, the ſoft *Italian* air,
The Toſs of quality and high-bred ſleer,
Now Lady HARRIOT reach'd her fifteenth Year:
Wing'd with diverſions all her moments flew,
Each, as it paſs'd, preſenting ſomething new;
Breakfaſts and auctions wear the morn away,
Each ev'ning gives an opera, or a play;
Then *Brag*'s eternal joys all night remain,
And kindly uſher in the morn again.

For love no time has ſhe, or inclination,
Yet muſt coquet it for the ſake of faſhion;
For this ſhe liſtens to each fop that's near,
Th' embroider'd colonel flatters with a ſneer,
And the cropt enſign nuzzels in her ear.

But with moſt warmth her dreſs and airs inſpire
Th' ambitious boſom of the landed 'ſquire,
Who fain wou'd quit plump DOLLY's ſofter charms
For wither'd lean *Right Honourable* arms;
He bows with reverence at her ſacred ſhrine,
And treats her as if ſprung from race divine,
Which ſhe returns with inſolence and ſcorn,
Nor deigns to ſmile on a Plebeian born.

Ere long by friends, by cards, and lovers croſs'd,
Her fortune, health, and reputation loſt;
Her money gone, yet not a tradeſman paid,
Her fame, yet ſhe ſtill damn'd to be a maid,
Her ſpirits ſink, her nerves are ſo unſtrung,
* She weeps, if but a handſome thief is hung:
By mercers, lacemen, mantua-makers preſt,
But moſt for ready caſh for play diſtreſt,
Where can ſhe turn!—The 'Squire muſt all repair,
She condeſcends to liſten to his pray'r,
And marries him at length in mere deſpair.

But ſoon th' endearments of a huſband cloy,
Her ſoul, her frame incapable of joy:
She feels no tranſports in the bridal-bed,
Of which ſo oft ſh'has heard, ſo much has read;
Then vex'd, that ſhe ſhould be condemn'd alone
To ſeek in vain this philoſophic ſtone,

* Some of the brighteſt eyes were at this time in tears for one Maclean, condemned for a robbery on the high-way.

To abler tutors ſhe reſolves t' apply,
A proſtitute from curioſity:
Hence men of ev'ry ſort, and ev'ry ſize,
* Impatient for heav'n's cordial drop, ſhe tries;
The fribbling beau, the rough unwieldy clown,
The ruddy templar newly on the town,
The Hibernian captain of gigantic make,
The brimful parſon, and th' exhauſted rake.

But ſtill malignant fate her wiſh denies,
Cards yield ſuperior joys, to cards ſhe flies;
All night from *rout* to *rout* her chairmen run,
Again ſhe plays, and is again undone.

Behold her now in ruin's frightful jaws!
Bonds, judgments, executions ope their paws;
Seize jewels, furniture, and plate, nor ſpare
The gilded chariot, or the toſſel'd chair;
For lonely ſeat ſhe's forc'd to quit the town,
And † Tubbs conveys the wretched exile down.

Now rumbling o'er the ſtones of *Tyburn-Road*,
Ne'er preſt with a more griev'd or guilty load,
She bids adieu to all the well-known ſtreets,
And envy's ev'ry cinder-wench ſhe meets;

* The cordial drop heav'n in our cup has thrown,
To make the nauſeous draught of life go down. Roch.

† A perſon well known for ſupplying people of quality with hired equipages.

And

And now the dreaded country firſt appears,
With ſighs unfeign'd the dying noiſe ſhe hears
Of diſtant coaches fainter by degrees,
Then ſtarts, and trembles at the ſight of trees.
Silent and ſullen, like ſome captive queen,
She's drawn along unwilling to be ſeen,
Until at length appears the ruin'd *Hall*
Within the graſs-green moat and ivy'd wall,
The doleful priſon where for ever ſhe,
But not, alas! her griefs, muſt bury'd be.

Her coach the curate and the tradeſmen meet,
Great-coated tenants her arrival greet,
And boys with ſtubble bonfires light the ſtreet,
While bells her ears with tongues diſcordant grate,
Types of the nuptial tyes they celebrate:
But no rejoicings can unbend her brow,
Nor deigns ſhe to return one aukward bow,
But bounces in, diſdaining once to ſpeak,
And wipes the trickling tear from off her cheek.

Now ſee her in the ſad decline of life,
A peeviſh miſtreſs, and a ſulky wife;
Her nerves unbrac'd, her faded cheek grown pale
With many a real, and many a fancy'd ail;
Of cards, admirers, equipage bereft,
Her inſolence, and title only left;
Severely humbled to her one-horſe chair,
And the low paſtimes of a country fair:

Too

Too wretched to endure one lonely day,
Too proud one friendly viſit to repay,
Too indolent to read, too criminal to pray,
At length half dead, half mad, and quite confin'd,
Shunning, and ſhun'd by all of human kind,
Ev'n rob'd of the laſt comfort of her life,
Inſulting the poor curate's callous wife,
Pride, diſappointed pride, now ſtops her breath,
And with true ſcorpion rage ſhe ſtings herſelf to death.

Horatii

Horatii Ep. I. *Lib.* II. *ad Auguſtum.*

THE

FIRST EPISTLE

OF THE

Second Book of HORACE,

IMITATED.

To the RIGHT HONOURABLE

PHILIP, Lord HARDWICKE,

Lord High Chancellor of GREAT-BRITAIN.

Written in the Year 1748.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following piece is a burleſque imitation: a ſpecies of poetry, whoſe chief excellence conſiſts in a lucky and humourous application of the words and ſentiments of any author to a new ſubject totally different from the original. This is what is uſually forgot both by the writers and readers of theſe kind of compoſitions; the firſt of whom are apt to ſtrike out new and independent thoughts of their own, and the latter to admire ſuch injudicious excreſcencies: theſe immediately loſe ſight of their original, and thoſe ſcarce ever caſt an eye towards him at all. It is thought proper therefore to advertiſe the reader, that in the following epiſtle he is to expect nothing more than an appoſite converſion of the ſerious ſentiments of Horace on the Roman poetry, into more ludicrous ones on the ſubject of Engliſh politicks; and if he thinks it not worth while to compare it line for line with the original, he will find in it neither wit, humour, nor even common ſenſe; all the little merit it can pretend to conſiſting ſolely in the cloſeneſs of ſo long, and uninterrupted an imitation.

HORATII

HORATII

Ep. I. Lib. II.

Ad AUGUSTUM.

CUM tot ſuſtineas, & tanta negotia ſolus,
Res Italas armis tuteris, moribus ornes,
Legibus emendes, in publica commoda peccem,
Si longo ſermone morer tua tempora, Cæſar.
Romulus, & Liber pater, & cum Caſtore Pollux,
Poſt ingentia facta, deorum in templa recepti,
Dum terras hominumque colunt genus, aſpera bella
Componunt, agros aſſignant, oppida condunt,

Ploravere

THE

FIRST EPISTLE

OF THE

Second Book of HORACE,

IMITATED.

WHILST you, my lord, ſuch various toils ſuſtain,
Preſide o'er Britain's Peers, her laws explain,
With ev'ry virtue ev'ry heart engage,
And live the bright example of the age,
With tedious verſe to treſpaſs on your time,
Is ſure impertinence, if not a crime.

All the fam'd heroes, ſtateſmen, admirals,
Who after death within the ſacred walls
Of WESTMINSTER with kings have been receiv'd,
Met with but ſorry treatment, while they liv'd;
And tho' they labour'd in their country's cauſe,
With arms defended her, and form'd with laws,

Ploravere suis non respondere favorem
Speratum meritis: [a] diram qui contudit hydram,
Notaque fatali portenta labore subegit,
Comperit invidiam supremo fine domari:
[a] Urit enim fulgore suo qui prægravat artes,
Infra se positas; extinctus amabitur idem.
[b] Præsenti tibi maturos largimur honores,
Jurandasque tuum per nomen ponimus aras,
[c] Nil oriturum alias, nil ortum tale fatentes.
[d] Sed tuus hic populus sapiens & justus in uno
Te nostris ducibus, te Graiis ante ferendo,
Cætera nequaquam simili ratione modoque
Æstimat, & nisi quæ terris semota, suisque
Temporibus defuncta videt, fastidit, & odit.
[e] Sic fautor veterum, ut tabulas peccare vetantes
Quas bis quinque viri sanxerunt, fœdera regum
Vel Gabiis, vel cum rigidis æquata Sabinis,
Pontificum libros, annosa volumina Vatum,
Dictitet Albano Musis in monte locutas.
[f] Si quia Græcorum sunt antiquissima quæque
Scripta vel optima, Romani pensantur eadem

Scriptores

Yet ever mourn'd they till'd a barren ſoil,
And left the world ungrateful to their toil.
'Ev'n * He, who long the houſe of Com--ns led,
That Hydra dire, with many a gaping head,
Found by experience to his lateſt breath,
Envy could only be ſubdu'd by death.
'Great men whilſt living muſt expect diſgraces,
Dead they're ador'd—— when none deſire their places.

'This common fate, my lord, attends not you
Above all equal, and all envy too;
With ſuch unrivall'd eminence you ſhine,
That in this truth alone all parties join,
The ſeat of juſtice in no former reign
'Was e'er ſo greatly fill'd, nor ever can again.

'But tho' the people are ſo juſt to you,
To none beſides will they allow their due,
No miniſter approve, who is not dead,
Nor till h' has loſt it, own he had a head;
'Yet ſuch reſpect they bear to ancient things,
They've ſome for former miniſters and kings;
And, with a kind of ſuperſtitious awe,
Deem Magna Charta ſtill a ſacred law.

'But, if becauſe the government was beſt
Of old in FRANCE, when freedom ſhe poſſeſt,

* Sir R—— W——.

Scriptores trutina non eſt quod multa loquamur
Nil intra eſt oleam, nil extra eſt in nuce duri:
[k] Venimus ad ſummam fortunæ pingimus atque
[l] Pſallimus, & luctamur Achivis doctior ipſis.

[m] Si meliora dies, ut vina poemata reddit
Scire velim, pretium chartis quotus arroget annus?
Scriptor abhinc annos centum, qui decidit, inter
Perfectos, veteresne referri debet? an inter
Viles, atque novos? excludat jurgia finis.
[n] Eſt vetus, atque probus, centum qui perficit annos?
Quid qui deperiit minor uno menſe, vel anno,
Inter quos referendus erit? veteresne poetas,
An quos & præſens, & poſtera reſpuet ætas?
Iſte quidem veteres inter ponetur honeſte
Qui vel menſe brevi, vel toto eſt junior anno
Utor permiſſo, caudæque pilos ut equinæ
[o] Paulatim vello, & demo unum, demo etiam unum,
Dum cadat elufus ratione ruentis acervi
Qui redit ad faſtos, & virtutem eſtimat annis,
Miraturque nihil, niſi quod Libitina ſacravit.

[p] Ennius & ſapiens, & fortis, & alter Homerus,
Ut critici dicunt, leviter curare videtur,
Quo promiſſa cadant, & ſomnia Pythagorea:
[q] Nævius in manibus non eſt, & mentibus hæret
Pene recens, adeo ſanctum eſt vetus omne poema.

[r] Ambigitur quoties uter utro ſit prior; aufert
Pacuvius docti famam ſenis, Accius alti:

Dicitur

In the ſame ſcale reſolv'd to weigh our own,
ENGLAND's we judge was ſo, who then had none;
Into moſt ſtrange abſurdities we fall,
Unworthy to be reaſon'd with at all.

'Brought to perfection in theſe days we ſee
All arts, and their great parent liberty,
'With ſkill profound we ſing, eat, dreſs, and dance,
And in each gout polite, excel ev'n FRANCE.

'If age of miniſters is then the teſt,
And, as of wines, the oldeſt are the beſt,
Let's try and fix ſome æra, if we can,
When good ones were extinct, and bad began:
'Are they all wicked ſince ELIZA's days?
Did none in CHARLES', or JAMES's merit praiſe?
Or are they knaves but ſince the revolution?
If none of theſe are facts then all's confuſion;
And by the ſelf-ſame rule one cannot fail,
'To pluck each hair out ſingly from the tail.

'Wiſe CECIL, lov'd by people and by prince,
As often broke his word as any ſince:
'Of ARTHUR's days we almoſt nothing know,
Yet ſing their praiſe, becauſe they're long ago.

'Oft as 'tis doubted in their ſeveral ways
Which of paſt orators beſt merit praiſe,
We find it to decide extremely hard,
If HARLEY's head deſerv'd the moſt regard,

Dicitur Afrani toga convenisse Menandro;
Plautus ad exemplar Siculi properare Epicharmi;
[s] Vincere Cæcilius gravitate, Terentius arte.
[t] Hos ediscit, & hos arcto stipata theatro
Spectat Roma potens; habet hos numeratque poetas
Ad nostrum tempus Livi scriptoris ab ævo.
[u] Interdum vulgus rectum videt; est ubi peccat.
[w] Si veteres ita miratur, laudatque poetas,
Ut nihil anteferat, nihil illis comparet; errat:
[x] Si quædam nimis antiquè, si pleraque durè
Dicere credit eos, ignavè multa fatetur;
Et sapit, & mecum facit & Jove judicat æquo.

[y] Non equidem insector, delendaque carmina Livi
Esse reor, memini quæ plagosum mihi parvo
[z] Orbilium dictitare; sed emendata videri
Pulchraque, & exactis minimum distantia, miror.
[a] Inter quæ verbum emicuit si forte decorum, &
Si versus paulos concinnior unus, & alter
Injuste totum ducit, venditque poema.
[b] Indignor quicquam reprehendi, non quia crasse
Compositum illepidève putetur sed quia nuper:
Nec veniam antiquis, sed honorem & præmia posci

Recte

Or WINDHAM's tongue, or JEKYL's patriot heart,
' Old SHIPPEN's gravity, or WALPOLE's art.
' Theſe were ador'd by all with whom they voted,
And in the fulleſt houſes ſtill are quoted;
Theſe have been fam'd from ANNA's days till ours,
When PULTNEY has improv'd, with unknown powers,
The art of miniſterial eloquence,
By adding honeſt truth to nervous ſenſe.
' Oft are the vulgar wrong, yet ſometimes right;
The late rebellion in the trueſt light
By chance they ſaw; but were not once ſo wiſe,
Unknown, unheard, in damning the exciſe:
" If former reigns they fancy had no fault,
I think their judgment is not worth a groat:
" But if they frankly own their politicks
Like ours, might have ſome blunders, and ſome tricks,
With ſuch impartial ſentiments I join,
And their opinions tally juſt with mine.

' I wou'd by no means church or king deſtroy,
And yet the doctrines, taught me when a boy
" By CRAB the curate, now ſeem wond'rous odd,
That either came immediately from God:
" In all the writings of thoſe high-flown ages
You meet with now and then ſome ſcatter'd pages
Wrote with ſome ſpirit and with ſenſe enough,
Theſe ſell the book, the reſt is wretched ſtuff:
" I'm quite provok'd, when principles, tho' true,
Muſt ſtand impeach'd by fools, becauſe they're new.

[c] Rectè necne crocum floresque perambulat Attæ
Fabula si dubitem, clamant periisse pudorem
Cuncti pene patres, ea cum reprendere coner
Quæ gravis Æsopus, quæ doctus Roscius egit.
Vel quia nil rectum, nisi quod placuit sibi, ducunt,
[d] Vel quia turpe putant parere minoribus, & quæ
Imberbes didicere, senes perdenda fateri.

[e] Jam Saliare Numæ carmen qui laudat, & illud
Quod mecum ignorat, solus vult scire videri;
Ingeniis non ille favet plauditque sepultis,
Nostra sed impugnat, nos nostraque lividis odit.
[f] Quod si tam Græcis novitas invisa fuisset
Quam nobis, quid nunc esset vetus? aut quid haberet
Quod legeret, tereretque viritim publicus usus?

[g] Ut primum positis nugari Græcia bellis
Cœpit, & in vitium fortunâ labier æqua,
[h] Nunc athletarum studiis, nunc arsit equorum,
[i] Marmoris, ut eboris fabros, ut aeris amaverit:
Suspendit picta vultum mentemque tabella:
[k] Nunc tibicinibus, nunc est gavisa tragœdis:
[l] Sub nutrice puella velut si luderet infans,
Quod cupidè petiit, mature plena reliquit.
Quid placet, aut odio est, quod non mutabile credas?
[m] Hoc pacis habuere bonæ, ventique secundi.

[n] Romæ

Shou'd I but question, only for a joke,
If all was flow'rs, when pompous HANMER spoke,
If things went right, when St. JOHN trod the stage,
How the old tories all would storm and rage!
They shun conviction, or because a truth
Confess'd in age implies they err'd in youth;
Or that they scorn to learn of junior wits:
What!—to be taught by LYTTELTONS and PITTS.

When angry patriots in prose or rhyme,
Extoll the virtuous deeds of former times,
They only mean the present to disgrace,
And look with envious hate on all in place:
But had the patriots of those ancient days,
Play'd the same game for profit, or for praise,
The trade, tho' now so flourishing and new,
Had long been ruin'd and the nation too.

ENGLAND, when once of peace and wealth possest,
Began to think frugality a jest,
So grew polite; hence all her well-bred heirs,
Gamesters, and jockeys turn'd, and cricket play'rs;
Pictures and busts in ev'ry house were seen;
What shou'd have paid the butcher, bought POUSSIN;
Now operas, now plays were all the fashion,
Then whist became the bus'ness of the nation,
That, like a froward child, in wanton play
Now cries for toys, then tosses them away;
Each hour we chang'd our pleasures, dress, and diet;
These were the blest effects of being quiet.

Not

[a] Romæ dulce diu fuit, & solemne reclusa
Mane domo vigilare, clienti promere jura,
Cautos nominibus certis expendere nummos;
[b] Majores audire, minores dicere per quæ
Crescere res posset, minui damnosa libido.
[c] Mutavit mentem populus levis, & calet uno
Scribendi studio; pueri, patresque severi
[d] Fronde comas vincti cœnant, & carmina dictant.
[e] Ipse ego, qui nullus me affirmo scribere versus,
Invenior Parthis mendacior; & prius orto
Sole, vigil calamum, & chartas, & scrinia posco.
[f] Navem agere ignarus navis timet; abrotonum ægro
Non audet, nisi qui didicit, dare; quod medicorum est.
Promittunt medici: tractant fabrilia fabri;
Scribimus indocti, doctique poemata passim.
[g] Hic error tamen, & levis hæc insania quantas
Virtutes habeat, sic collige; Vatis avarus

Non

[n] Not thus behav'd the true old English 'squire,
He ſmoak'd his pipe each morn by his own fire,
There juſtice to diſpenſe was ever willing,
And for his warrants pick'd up many a ſhilling;
[o] To teach his younger neighbours always glad,
Where for their corn beſt markets might be had,
And from experienc'd age as glad to learn,
How to defraud unſeen the parſon's barn.

[p] But now the world's quite alter'd, all are bent
To leave their farm, and fly to parliament:
Old men and boys in this alone agree,
And vainly courting popularity,
Ply their obſtrep'rous voters all night long
[q] With bumpers, toaſts, and now and then a ſong:
[r] Ev'n I, who ſwear theſe follies I deſpiſe,
Than ſtateſmen, or their porters, tell more lies;
And, for the faſhion-ſake, in ſpite of nature,
Commence ſometimes a moſt important creature,
Buſy as Car——w rave for ink and quills,
And ſtuff my head and pockets full of bills.

[s] Few land-men go to ſea unleſs they're preſt,
And quacks in all profeſſions are a jeſt;
None dare to kill, except moſt learn'd phyſicians,
Learn'd, or unlearn'd, we all are politicians:
There's not a ſoul but thinks, cou'd he be ſent,
H' has parts enough to ſhine in parliament.

[t] Tho' many ills this modern taſte produces,
Yet ſtill, my lord, 'tis not without its uſes;

[a] Non temere eſt animus: verſus amat, hoc ſtudet unum:
[w] Detrimenta, fugas ſervorum, incendia ridet;
[x] Non fraudem ſocio, puerove incogitat ullum
Pupillo: [y] vivit ſiliquis, & pane ſecundo;
[z] Militiæ quamquam piger, & malus, utilis urbi.

[a] Si das hoc parvis quoque rebus magna juvari,
[b] Os tenerum pueri balbumque poeta figurat,
[c] Torquet ab obſcœnis jam nunc ſermonibus aurem,
[d] Mox etiam pectus præceptis format amicis,
Aſperitatis, & invidiæ corrector, & iræ:
[e] Recte facta refert; orientia tempora notis
Inſtruit exemplis; [f] inopem ſolatur & ægrum.

[g] Caſtis cum pueris ignara puella mariti
Diſceret unde preces, vatem ni muſa dediſſet?
Poſcit opem chorus, & præſentia numina ſentit,
[h] Cœleſtes implorat aquas docta prece blandus;

Avertit

[a] Theſe minor politicians are a kind
Not much to ſelfiſh avarice inclin'd;
Do but allow them with applauſe to ſpeak,
[b] They little care, tho' all their tenants break;
[c] They form intrigues with no man's wife, or daughter,
[d] And live on pudden, chicken-broth, and water;
[e] Fierce Jacobites, as far as bluſt'ring words,
But loth in any cauſe to draw their ſwords.

[f] Were ſmaller matters worthy of attention,
A thouſand other uſes I cou'd mention;
For inſtance, in each monthly magazine
Their eſſays and orations ſtill are ſeen,
[g] And magazines teach boys and girls to read,
And are the canons of each tradeſman's creed;
Apprentices they ſerve to entertain,
[h] Inſtead of ſmutty tales, and plays profane;
[i] Inſtruct them how their paſſions to command,
And to hate none—but thoſe who rule the land:
[k] Facts they record, births, marriages, and deaths,
[l] Sometimes receipts for claps, and ſtinking breaths.

[m] When with her brothers miſs comes up to town,
How for each play can ſhe afford a crown?
Where find diverſions gratis, and yet pretty,
Unleſs ſhe goes to church, or a committee;
And ſure committees better entertain,
[n] Than hearing a dull parſon pray for rain,

[o] Or

[1] Avertit morbos, metuenda pericula pellit,
[2] Impetrat & pacem, & locupletem frugibus annum:
[3] Carmine Dii superi placantur, carmine Manes.

[4] Agricolæ prisci, fortes, parvoque beati,
[5] Condita post frumenta, levantes tempore festo
Corpus, & ipsum animum spe finis dura ferentem,
Cum sociis operum, & pueris, & conjuge fidâ
Tellurem porco, Silvanum lacte piabant,
Floribus, & vino, Genium memorem brevis ævi.
[6] Fescennina per hunc inventa licentia morem
Versibus alternis opprobria rustica fudit;
[7] Libertasque recurrentes accepta per annos
Lusit amabiliter; donec jam sævus apertam
[8] In rabiem verti cœpit jocus, & per honestas
Ire domos impune minax; doluere cruenta
[9] Dente lacessiti: fuit intactis quoque cura
Conditione super communi; quin etiam lex
[10] Pœnaque lata, malo quæ nollet carmine quemquam
Describi; vertere modum formidine fustis
Ad bene dicendum, delectandumque reducti.
[11] Græcia capta ferum victorem cepit, & artes
Intulit agresti Latio, sic horridus ille
[12] Defluxit numerus Saturnius, & grave virus
Munditiæ pepulere: sed in longum tamen ævum
[13] Manserunt, hodieque manent vestigia ruris.

[x] Serus

[i] Or whistling lay deliverance from battle,
Dangers, and fire, and sickness amongst cattle;
At church she hears with unattentive ear
[k] The pray'rs for peace, and for a plenteous year,
But here quite charm'd with so much wit and sense,
She falls a victim soon to eloquence;
Well may she fall; since eloquence has power
[l] To govern both the upper house and lower.

[m] Our ancient gentry, frugal, bold, and rough,
Were farmers, yet liv'd happily enough;
[n] They, when in barns their corn was safely lay'd,
For harvest-homes great entertainments made,
The well-rubb'd tables crack'd with beef and pork,
And all the supper shar'd who shar'd the work;
[o] This gave freeholders first a taste for eating,
And was the source of all election-treating;
[p] A while their jests, tho' merry, yet were wise,
And they took none but decent liberties.
Brandy and punch at length such riots bred,
[q] No sober family cou'd sleep in bed:
[r] All were alarm'd, ev'n those who had no hurt
[s] Call'd in the law, to stop such dang'rous sport.
[t] Rich citizens at length new arts brought down
With ready cash, to win each country town;
[u] This less disorders caus'd than downright drink,
Freemen grew civil, and began to think;
[v] But still all canvassing produc'd confusion,
The relicts of its rustic institution.

[x] 'Tis

[x] Serus enim Græcis admovit acumina chartis,
Et post Punica bella quietus, quærere cœpit,
Quid Sophocles, & Thespis, & Æschylus utile ferrent;
Tentavit quoque rem, si digne vertere posset,
[y] Et placuit sibi natura sublimis, & acer,
Nam spirat tragicum satis, & feliciter audet:
[z] Sed turpem putat in scriptis, metuitque lituram.
[a] Creditur ex medio quia res arcessit, habere
[b] Sudoris minimum; sed habet Comœdia tanto
Plus oneris, quanto veniæ minus; [c] Aspice Plautus
[d] Quo pacto partes tutetur amantis ephebi!
[e] Ut patris attenti, [f] lenonis ut insidiosi;
Quantus sit Dossennus [g] edacibus in parasitis!
[h] Quam non astricto percurrat pulpita socco!
[i] Gestit enim nummos in loculos demittere, post hoc
Securus cadat, an recto stet fabula talo.

[k] Quem tulit ad scenam ventoso gloria curru,
Exanimat lentus spectator, sedulus instat;

'Tis true of late, ſince thirty years of peace
To uſeful ſciences have given increaſe,
Since we have inquir'd how Rome's colonies of old
Barter'd their liberties for feaſts and gold,
What treaſons proud Syracuſe gave,
And try'd, like them, to buy each hungry knave,
Nor try'd in vain; too fortunately bold
Many have purchas'd votes, and many ſold;
No laws can now amend this venal land,
That dreads the touch of a reforming hand.

Some think an int'reſt may be form'd with eaſe,
Becauſe the vulgar we muſt chiefly pleaſe;
But for that reaſon 'tis the harder talk.
For ſuch will neither pardon grant, nor aſk.
See how Sir Wiſdom matters of this art,
By different methods with each Commonwealth!
He tells raw youths, that whoring is no harm,
And teaches their attentive ſires to farm;
To his own table lovingly invites
Inſidious pimps, and hungry paraſites:
Sometimes in ſlippers, and a morning gown,
He pays his early viſits round a Town,
At every houſe relates his ſtories over,
Of place-bills, taxes, turnips, and HANOVER;
If tales will money ſave, and buſineſs do,
It matters little, are they falſe or true.

Whoe'er prefers a clam'rous mob's applauſe
To his own conſcience, or his country's cauſe,

[1] Sic leve, sic parvum est, animum quod laudis avarum
Subruit aut reficit: [m] Valeat res ludicra, si me
Palma negata macrum, donata reducit opimum.

[n] Sæpe etiam audacem fugat hoc, terretque poetam
Quod numero plures, virtute & honore minores,
Indocti, stolidique, & depugnare parati,
Si discordet eques, media inter carmina poscunt
[o] Aut ursum, aut pugiles; nam his plebecula gaudet.
[p] Verum equitis quoque jam migravit ab aure voluptas
Omnis ad incertos oculos, & gaudia vana:
Quatuor aut plures Aulæa premuntur in horas,
[q] Dum fugiunt equitum turmæ, peditumque catervæ.
Mox trahitur manibus regum fortuna retortis:
Esseda festinant, pilenta, petorrita, naves,
[r] Captivum portatur ebur, captiva Corinthus.
[s] Si foret in terris, rideret Democritus, seu
Diversum confusa genus panthera, camelo
Sive elephas albus vulgi converterer ora:
Spectaret populum ludis attentius ipsis;
Ut sibi prebentem mimo spectacula plura.
Scriptores autem narrare putaret asello
[t] Fabellam surdo; nam quæ pervincere voces
Evaluere sonum, referent quem nostra theatra?
Garganum mugire putes nemus, aut mare Tuscum:
Tanto cum strepitu ludi spectantur, & artis
Divitiisque peregrinis: [u] quibus oblitus actor
Quum stetit in scena, concurrit dextera lævæ.
[w] Dixit adhuc aliquid? Nil sane: quid placet ergo?
Lana

Is soon elated, and as soon cast down
By every drunken cobler's smile, or frown;
So small a matter can depress or raise
A mind, that's meanly covetous of praise:
But if my quiet must dependent be
On the vain breath of popularity,
A wind each hour to diff'rent quarters veering,
Adieu, say I, to all Electioneering.

The boldest orator it disconcerts,
To find the many, tho' of meanest parts,
Illit'rate, squabbling, discontented prigs,
Prefer t' attend a boxing match at Figg's,
To all good sense, and reason shut their ears,
Yet take delight in S—D—M's * bulls and bears.

' Young knights now sent from many a distant shire
Are better pleas'd with what they see than hear;
Their joy's to view his majesty approach,
Drawn by eight milk-white steeds in gilded coach,
The pageant show and bustle to behold,
' The guards both horse and foot lac'd o'er with gold,
The rich insignia from the Tower brought down,
' The ivory sceptre and the radiant crown.
The mob huzza, the thund'ring cannons roar,
And business is delay'd at least an hour;
The Speaker calls indeed to mind what passes,
' But might as well read orders to deaf asses.

' But now see honest V—— rise to joke!
The house all laugh; " what says he? has he spoke?

Lana Tarentino violas imitata veneno.
[x] Ac ne forte putes me, quæ facere ipse recusem,
Quum recte tractent alii, laudare maligne;
[y] Ille per extentum funem mihi posse videtur
Ire poetam, meum qui pectus inaniter angit,
[z] Irritat, mulcet, falsis terroribus implet,
[a] Ut magus, & [b] modo me Thebis, modo ponit Athenis.
[c] Verum age, & his qui se lectori credere malunt,
Quam spectatoris fastidia ferre superbi,
Curam redde brevem, [d] si munus Apolline dignum
Vis complere libris, [e] & vatibus addere calcar,
Ut studio majore petant Helicona virentem.
Multa quidem nobis facimus mala sæpe poetæ,
[f] (Ut vineta egomet cædam mea) quum tibi librum
[g] Sollicito damus, aut fesso! quum lædimur, unum
[h] Si quis amicorum est ausus reprendere versum,
[i] Quum loca, jam recitata revolvimus irrevocati,
[k] Quum lamentamur, non apparere labores
Nostros, & tenui deducta poemata filo;

No not a word; then whence this ſudden mirth?
His phyz foretells ſome jeſt's approaching birth.

[y] But leſt I ſeem theſe orators to wrong,
Envious, becauſe I ſhare no gift of tongue,
[z] Is there a MAN whoſe eloquence has pow'r
To clear the fulleſt houſe in half an hour,
Who now appears to rave and now to weep,
[a] Who ſometimes makes us ſwear, and ſometimes ſleep,
Now fills our heads with falſe alarms from FRANCE,
[b] Then conjurer like [c] to INDIA bids us dance,
All eulogies on him we own are true,
For ſurely he does all that man can do.

[d] But whilſt, my lord, theſe makers of our laws,
Thus ſpeak themſelves into the world's applauſe,
[e] Let hands for ſuch attempts too modeſt ſhare,
What more they prize, your patronage and care,
[f] If you would ſpur them up the muſe's hill,
Or aſk their aid your library to fill.
[g] We poets are in ev'ry age, and nation,
A moſt abſurd, wrong-headed generation;
This in a thouſand inſtances is ſhewn,
(Myſelf as guilty as the reſt I own)
As when on you our nonſenſe we impoſe,
[h] Tir'd with the nonſenſe you have heard in proſe;
[i] When w' are offended, if ſome honeſt friend
Preſumes one unharmonious verſe to mend;
[k] When undeſir'd our labours we repeat,
[l] Grieve they're no more regarded by the Great,

[m] And

[m] Quum ſperamus eo rem venturam, ut ſimul atque
Carmina reſcieris nos fingere commodus ultro
Arceſſas, & egere vetes, & ſcribere cogas.

[n] Sed tamen eſt operæ pretium cognoſcere quales
Ædituos habeat belli, ſpectata domique
Virtus, indigno non committenda poetæ.
[o] Gratus Alexandro regi Magno fuit ille
Chœrilus, incultis qui verſibus & male natis
Rettulit acceptos, regale numiſma, Philippos.
Sed veluti tractata notam labemque remittunt
Atramenta, fere ſcriptores carmine fœdo
Splendida facta linunt; idem rex ille, poema
Qui tam ridiculum tam care prodigus emit,
Edicto vetuit, nequis ſe præter Apellem
Pingeret, aut alius Lyſippo duceret æra
[p] Fortis Alexandri vultum ſimulantia; quod ſi
Judicium ſubtile videndis artibus illud
Ad libros, & ad hæc Muſarum dona vocares,
[q] Bœotum in craſſo jurares aere natum.

[r] At neque dedecorant tua de ſe judicia, atque
Munera, quæ multa dantis cum laude tulerunt,
Delecti tibi Virgilius, Variuſque poetæ:
[s] Nec magis expreſſi vultus per aenea ſigna
Quam per vatis opus mores animique virorum
Clarorum apparent. [t] Nec ſermones ego mallem
Repentes per humum, quam res componere geſtas
Terrarumque ſitus, & flumina dicere, & arces
Montibus impoſitas, & barbara regna, tuiſque
[x] Auſpiciis

And fancy, ſhou'd You once but ſee our faces,
You'd bid us write, and pay us all with places.

'Tis your's, my lord, to form the ſoul to verſe,
Who have ſuch num'rous virtues to rehearſe;
Great ALEXANDER once, in ancient days,
Pay'd CHOERILUS for daubing him with praiſe;
And yet the ſame fam'd heroe made a law,
None but APELLES ſhou'd his picture draw;
None but LYSIPPUS caſt his royal head
In braſs: it had been treaſon if in lead;
A prince he was in valour ne'er ſurpaſs'd,
And had in painting too perhaps ſome taſte;
But as to verſe, undoubted is the matter,
He muſt be dull, as a Dutch commentator.

But you, my lord, a fav'rite of the muſe,
Wou'd chuſe good poets, were there good to chuſe;
You know they paint the great man's ſoul as like,
As can his features KNELLER, or VANDYKE.
Had I ſuch pow'r, I never wou'd compoſe
Such creeping lines as theſe, nor verſe, nor proſe;
But rather try to celebrate your praiſe,
And with your juſt encomiums ſwell my lays:
Had I a genius equal to my will,
Gladly would I exert my utmoſt ſkill
To conſecrate to fame BRITANNIA's land
Receiving law from your impartial hand;
By your wiſe councils once more pow'rful made,
Her fleets rever'd, and flouriſhing her trade;

Auſpiciis totum confecta duella per orbem,
Clauſtraque cuſtodem pacis cohibentia Janum,
Et formidatam Parthis te principe Romam:
Si quantum cupiam, poſſem quoque; ſed neque parvum
Carmen majeſtas recipit tua, nec meus audet
Rem tentare pudor quam vires ferre recuſent.
Sedulitas autem ſtulte quem diligit, urget,
Præcipuè cum ſe numeris commendat & arte.
Diſcit enim citius meminitque libentius, illud
Quod quis deridet, quam quod probat & veneratur.
Nil moror officium quod me gravat: ac neque ficto
In pejus vultu proponi cereus uſquam,
Nec prave factis decorari verſibus opto:
Ne rubeam pingui donatus munere, & una
Cum ſcriptore meo, capſa porrectus aperta,
Deferar in vicum vendentem thus & odores,
Et piper, & quicquid chartis amicitur ineptis.

* Exhauſted nations trembling at her ſword,
* And * PEACE long wiſh'd for to the world reſtor'd,
* But your true greatneſs ſuffers no ſuch praiſe,
* My verſe would ſink the theme it meant to raiſe;
Unequal to the task you'd ſurely meet
Deſerv'd contempt, and each preſumptuous ſheet
Could ſerve for nothing, ſcrawl'd with lines ſo ſimple,
* Unleſs to wrap up ſugar-loaves for Wimple.

* A general peace was at this time juſt concluded at Aix la Chapelle.

To the Right Honourable the EARL *of* CHESTERFIELD, *on his being installed* KNIGHT *of the* GARTER.

THESE trophies, STANHOPE, of a lovely dame,
Once the bright object of a monarch's flame,
Who with such just propriety can wear,
As thou the darling of the gay and fair?
See ev'ry friend to wit, politeness, love,
With one consent thy Sovereign's choice approve!
And liv'd PLANTAGENET her voice to join,
Herself, and GARTER, both were surely thine.

To a Lady in Town, ſoon after her leaving the Country.

WHILST you, dear maid, o'er thouſands born to reign,
For the gay town exchange the rural plain,
The cooling breeze, and ev'ning walk forſake
For ſtifling crowds, which your own beauties make;
Thro' circling joys while you inceſſant ſtray,
Charm in the Mall, and ſparkle at the play;
Think (if ſucceſſive vanities can ſpare
One thought to love) what cruel pangs I bear,
Left in theſe plains all wretched, and alone,
To weep with fountains, and with echos groan,
And mourn inceſſantly that fatal day,
That all my bliſs with CHLOE ſnatch'd away.

Say by what arts I can relieve my pain,
Muſic, verſe, all I try, but try in vain;
In vain the breathing flute my hand employs,
Late the companion of my CHLOE's voice,

Nor

Nor HANDEL's nor CORELLI's tuneful airs
Can harmonize my ſoul, or ſooth my cares;
Thoſe once-lov'd medicines unſucceſsful prove,
Muſick, alas, is but the voice of love!
In vain I oft harmonious lines peruſe,
And ſeek for aid from POPE's, and PRIOR's muſe;
Their treach'rous numbers but aſſiſt the foe,
And call forth ſcenes of ſympathiſing woe:
Here HELOISE mourns her abſent lover's charms,
There parting EMMA ſighs in HENRY's arms;
Their loves like mine ill-fated I bemoan,
And in their tender ſorrows read my own.

Reſtleſs ſometimes, as oft the mournful dove
Forſakes her neſt forſaken by her love,
I fly from home, and ſeek the ſacred fields
Where CAM's old urn its ſilver current yields,
Where ſolemn tow'rs o'erlook each mofſy grove,
As if to guard it from th' aſſaults of love;
Yet guard in vain, for there my CHLOE's eyes
But lately made whole colleges her prize;
Her ſons, tho' few, not PALLAS cou'd defend,
Nor DULLNESS ſuccour to her thouſands lend;
Love like a fever with infectious rage
Scorch'd up the young, and thaw'd the froſt of age!
To gaze at her, ev'n DONNS were ſeen to run,
And leave unfiniſh'd pipes, and authors — ſcarce begun.

* So

* So HELEN look'd, and mov'd with ſuch a grace,
When the grave ſeniors of the Trojan race
Were forc'd thoſe fatal beauties to admire,
That all their youth conſum'd, and ſet their town on fire.

At fam'd NEWMARKET oft I ſpend the day
An unconcern'd ſpectator of the play:
There pitileſs obſerve the ruin'd heir
With anger fir'd, or melting with deſpair;
For how ſhou'd I his trivial loſs bemoan,
Who feel one ſo much greater, of my own?
There while the golden heaps, a glorious prize,
Wait the deciſion of two rival dice,
Whilſt long diſputes 'twixt *ſeven* and *five* remain,
And each, like parties, have their friends for gain,
Without one wiſh I ſee the guineas ſhine,
Fate, keep your gold, I cry, make CHLOE mine.
Now ſee, prepar'd their utmoſt ſpeed to try,
O'er the ſmooth turf the bounding racers fly!
Now more and more their ſlender limbs they ſtrain,
And foaming ſtretch along the velvet plain!
Ah ſtay! ſwift ſteeds, your rapid flight delay,
No more the jockey's ſmarting laſh obey:
But rather let my hand direct the rein,
And guide your ſteps a nobler prize to gain;
Then ſwift as eagles cut the yielding air,
Bear me, oh bear me to the abſent fair.

* Vid. Hom. IL. Lib. III. Ver. 150.

Now

Now when the winds are hush'd, the air ſerene,
And chearful ſun-beams gild the beauteous ſcene,
Penſive o'er all the neighb'ring fields I ſtray,
Where-e'er or choice, or chance directs the way:
Or view the op'ning lawns, or private woods,
Or diſtant bluiſh hills, or ſilver floods:
Now harmleſs birds in ſilken nets inſnare,
Now with ſwift dogs purſue the flying hare:
Dull ſports! for oh my CHLOE is not there!

Fatigu'd at length I willingly retire
To a ſmall ſtudy, and a chearful fire,
There o'er ſome folio pore, I pore 'tis true,
But oh my thoughts are fled, and fled to you!
I hear you, ſee you, feaſt upon your eyes,
And claſp with eager arms the lovely prize.
Here for a while I cou'd forget my pain,
Whilſt I by dear reflection live again:
But ev'n theſe joys are too ſublime to laſt,
And quickly fade, like all the real ones paſt;
For juſt when now beneath ſome ſilent grove
I hear you talk—and talk perhaps of love,
Or charm with thrilling notes the liſt'ning ear,
Sweeter than angels ſing, or angels hear,
My treach'rous hand its weighty charge lets go,
The book falls thund'ring on the floor below,
The pleaſing viſion in a moment's gone,
And I once more am wretched, and alone.

So

So when glad ORPHEUS from th' infernal ſhade
Had juſt recall'd his long-lamented maid,
Soon as her charms had reach'd his eager eyes,
Loſt in eternal night—again ſhe dies.

To a LADY.

Sent with a Preſent of Shells and Stones deſign'd for a GROTTO.

WITH gifts like theſe, the ſpoils of neighb'ring ſhores,
The Indian ſwain his ſable love adores:
Off'rings well ſuited to the duſky ſhrine
Of his rude goddeſs, but unworthy mine:
And yet they ſeem not ſuch a worthleſs prize,
If nicely view'd by philoſophic eyes;
And ſuch are yours, that nature's works admire
With warmth like that, which they themſelves inſpire.

To ſuch how fair appears each grain of ſand,
Or humbleſt weed as wrought by nature's hand!
How far ſuperior to all human pow'r
Springs the green blade, or buds the painted flow'r!
In all her births, tho' of the meaneſt kinds,
A juſt obſerver entertainment finds,

With

With [illegible] delight, her low productions [illegible],
And how [illegible] by degrees [illegible]
A ſhell, or ſtone, he can with pleaſure view;
Hence trace her [illegible], the [illegible] and you.

Behold, how bright theſe gaudy trifles ſhine,
The lovely ſportings of a [illegible]
See with what art each curious ſhell is made,
How carv'd in [illegible], there [illegible] inlaid!
What vivid ſtreaks th' enamell'd ſtones adorn,
Fair as the paintings of the purple morn!
Yet ſtill not half their charms can reach our eyes,
While thus confus'd the ſparkling chaos lies;
Doubly they'll pleaſe, when in your grotto plac'd,
They plainly ſpeak their fair diſpoſer's taſte;
Then glories yet unſeen ſhall o'er them riſe,
New order from your hand, new luſtre from your eyes.

How ſweet, how charming will appear this Grot,
When by your art to full perfection brought;
Here verdant plants, and blooming flow'rs will grow,
There bubbling currents thro' the ſhell-work flow;
Here coral mixt with ſhells of various dyes,
There poliſh'd ſtones will charm our wand'ring eyes;
Delightful bow'r of bliſs! ſecure retreat!
Fit for the Muſes, and STATIRA's ſeat.

But ſtill how good muſt be that fair one's mind,
Who thus in ſolitude can pleaſure find!
The muſe her company, good ſenſe her guide,
Reſiſtleſs charms her pow'r, but not her pride:

Who thus forsakes the town, the park, and play,
In silent shades to pass her hours away;
Who hates like death the fresh country air,
Thus pale imprison'd in a velvet chair,
And makes the warbling nightingale her choice,
Before the thrills of Farinelli's voice;
Prefers her books, and conscience void of ill,
To conserts, balls, assemblies, and quadrille:
Sweet hour's unpurpos'd than gilded chariots crowd,
For groves the playhouse quits, and beaus for trees.

Blest is the man, whom heav'n shall grant one hour
With such a lovely nymph, in such a lovely bow'r!

To a LADY,

In Answer to a Letter wrote in a very fine Hand.

WHILST well-wrote lines our wond'ring eyes command,
The beauteous work of CHLOE's artful hand,
Throughout the finish'd piece we see display'd
Th' exactest image of the lovely maid;
Such is her wit, and such her form divine,
This pure, as flows the style thro' ev'ry line,
That like each letter, exquisitely fine.

See with what art the ſable currents ſtain
In wand'ring mazes all the milk-white plain!
Thus o'er the meadows wrap'd in ſilver ſnow
Unfrozen brooks in dark meanders flow;
Thus jetty curls in ſhining ringlets deck
The ivory plain of lovely CHLOE's neck:
See, like ſome virgin, whoſe unmeaning charms
Receive new luſtre from a lover's arms,
The yielding paper's pure, but vacant breaſt,
By her fair hand and flowing pen impreſt,
At ev'ry touch more animated grows,
And with new life and new ideas glows,
Freſh beauties from the kind deſiler gains,
And ſhines each moment brighter from its ſtains.

***

When that fair form, which thouſands now adore,
By years decay'd, ſhall tyrannize no more,
Theſe lovely lines ſhall future ages view,
And eyes unborn, like ours, be charm'd by you.

How oft do I admire with fond delight
The curious piece, and wiſh like you to write!
Alas, vain hope! that might as well aſpire
To copy PAULO's ſtroke, or TITIAN's fire.
Ev'n now your ſplendid lines before me lie,
And I in vain to imitate them try;
Believe me, fair, I'm practiſing this art,
To ſteal your hand, in hopes to ſteal your heart.

To the Right Honourable the Lady MARGARET CAVENDISH HARLEY, *preſented with a Collection of* POEMS.

THE tuneful throng was ever beauty's care,
And verſe a tribute ſacred to the fair;
Hence in each age the loveliеſt nymph has been,
By undiſputed right, the muſes queen;
Her ſmiles have all poetic boſoms fir'd,
And patroniz'd the verſe themſelves inſpir'd:
LESBIA preſided thus in Roman times,
Thus SACHARISSA reign'd o'er Britiſh rhymes,
And preſent bards to MARGARETTA bow,
For, what they were of old, is HARLEY now.

72404

From OXFORD's houſe, in theſe dull buſy days,
Alone we hope for patronage, or praiſe;
He to our ſlighted labours ſtill is kind,
Beneath his roof w' are ever ſure to find
(Reward ſufficient for the world's neglect)
Charms to inſpire, and goodneſs to protect;
Your eyes with rapture animate our lays,
Your ſire's kind hand uprears our drooping bays;
Form'd for our glory and ſupport, ye ſeem,
Our conſtant patron he, and you our theme.
Where ſhou'd poetic homage then be pay'd?
Where ev'ry verſe, but at your feet, be lay'd?
A double right you to this empire bear,
As firſt in beauty, and as OXFORD's heir.

Illuſtrious maid! in whoſe ſole perſon join'd
Ev'ry perfection of the fair we find,
Charms that might warrant all her ſex's pride,
Without one foible of her ſex to hide;
Good nature artleſs as the bloom that dyes
Her cheeks, and wit as piercing as her eyes.
Oh HARLEY! cou'd but you theſe lines approve,
Theſe children ſprung from idleneſs and love,
Cou'd they, (but ah how vain is the deſign!)
Hope to amuſe your hours, as once they've mine,
Th' ill judging world's applauſe, and critics blame,
Alike I'd ſcorn: Your approbation's fame.

HORACE,

HORACE,

BOOK II. ODE XVI.

IMITATED.

HORATII,

Lib. II. Od. XVI.

1. OTIUM divos rogat in patenti
Prenſus Ægeo, ſimul atra nubes
Condidit Lunam, neque certa fulgent
Sidera nautis.

2. Otium bello furioſa Thrace,
Otium Medi pharetra decori
Groſphe, non gemmis, neque purpurâ venale, nec auro.

3. Non enim gazæ, neque conſularis
Summovet lictor miſeros tumultus
Mentis, & curas laqueata circum
Tecta volantes.

4. Vivitur parvo bene cui paternum
Splendit in mensâ tenui ſalinum,
Nec leves ſomnos timor, aut cupido
Sordidus aufert.

HORACE,

BOOK II. ODE XVI.

IMITATED.

To the Hon. PHILIP YORKE, Eſq;

Soon after the General Election in 1747.

1. FOR quiet, YORKE, the ſailor cries,
When gathering ſtorms obſcure the ſkies,
The ſtars no more appearing;
2. The candidate for quiet prays,
Sick of the bumpers and huzza's,
Of bleſt electioneering.

3. Who thinks, that from the Speaker's chair
The Serjeant's mace can keep off care,
Is wond'rouſly miſtaken:
4. Alas! he is not half ſo bleſt
As thoſe, wh' have liberty, and reſt,
And dine on beans and bacon.

Quid brevi fortes jaculamur ævo
Multa? quid terras alio calente
Sole mutamus? patriæ quis exul
Se quoque fugit?

Scandit æratas vitioſa naves
Cura: nec turmas equitum relinquit,
Ocyor cervis, & agente nimbos
Ocyor Euro.

Lætus in præſens animus, quod ultra eſt
Oderit curare, & amara lento
Temperet riſu. Nihil eſt ab omni
Parte beatum.

Abſtulit clarum cita mors Achillem,
Longa Tithonum minuit ſenectus;
Et mihi forſan, tibi quod negârit,
Porriget hora.

5. Why ſhould we then to London run,
And quit our chearful country fun
For buſineſs, dirt, and ſmoke?
Can we, by changing place, and air,
Ourſelves get rid of, or our care;
In troth 'tis all a joke.

6. Care climbs proud ſhips of mightieſt force,
And mounts behind the general's horſe,
Outſtrips huſſars, and pandours;
Far ſwifter than the bounding hind,
Swifter than clouds before the wind,
Or ——— before th'Highlanders.

7. A man, when once he's ſafely choſe,
Shou'd laugh at all his threatning foes,
Nor think of future evil:
Each good has its attendant ill;
8. A ſeat is no bad thing, but ſtill
Elections are the devil.

9. Its gifts with hand impartial heav'n
Divides: to ORFORD it was giv'n
To die in full-blown glory;
10. To ——— indeed a longer date,
But then with unrelenting hate
Purſu'd by Whig and Tory.

11. Te greges centum, Siculæque circùm
Mugiunt vaccæ: tibi tollit hinnitum
12. Apta quadrigis equa: te bis Afro
Murice tinctæ

Veſtiunt lanæ: 13. mihi parva rura
14. Spiritum Graiæ tenuem Camœnæ
Parca non mendax dedit, & malignum
Spernere vulgus.

11. The gods to you with bounteous hand
Have granted ſeats, and parks, and land;
Brocades and ſilks you wear;
With claret, and ragouts you treat,
12. Six neighing ſteeds with nimble feet
Whirl on your gilded car:

13. To me they've giv'n a ſmall retreat,
Good port and mutton, beſt of meat,
With broad-cloth on my ſhoulders,
A ſoul that ſcorns a dirty job,
14. Loves a good rhyme, and hates a mob,
I mean who an't freeholders.

HORATII,

LIB. IV. OD. VIII.

1. DONAREM pateras grataque commodus,
Cenſorine, meis æra ſodalibus:
Donarem tripodas, præmia fortium
Grajorum; 2. neque tu peſſima munerum
Ferres, me divite ſcilicet artium,
Quas aut Parrhaſius protulit aut ſcopas
3. Hic ſaxo, liquidis ille coloribus
Solers nunc hominem ponere, nunc deum.

4. Sed

HORACE,

BOOK IV. ODE VIII.

IMITATED.

[To the Same.]

1. DID but kind fate to me impart
Wealth equal to my gen'rous heart,
Some curious gift to ev'ry friend,
A token of my love, I'd ſend;
2. But ſtill the choiceſt and the beſt
Shou'd be conſign'd to friends at WREST.

An organ, which, if right I gueſs,
Wou'd beſt pleaſe lady MARCHIONESS,
Shou'd firſt be ſent by my command,
Worthy of her inſpiring hand:
To lady BELL of niceſt mould
A coral ſet in burniſh'd gold:
To you, well knowing what you like,
3. Portraits by LELY or VANDYKE,
A curious bronze, or buſt antique.

4. But

4. Sed non hæc mihi vis, nec tibi talium
Res est, aut animus deliciarum egens.
Gaudes carminibus, carmina possumus
Donare, 5. & pretium dicere muneri.

6. Non incisa notis marmora publicis
Per quæ spiritus & vita redit bonis
Post mortem ducibus: non celeres fugæ
Rejectæque retrorsum Annibalis minæ
Non incendia Carthaginis impiæ
Ejus, qui domitâ nomen ab Africâ
Lucratus rediit, clarius indicant
Laudes, quam Calabræ Pierides, neque
7. Si chartæ sileant quod bene feceris
Mercedem tuleres. 8. Quid foret Iliæ
Mavortisque puer si taciturnitas
Obstaret meritis invida Romuli?
Ereptum Stygiis fluctibus Æacum
Virtus & favor & lingua potentium
Vatum divitibus consecrat insulis.

9. Dignum

4. But ſince theſe gifts exceed my power,
And you, who need not wiſh for more,
Already bleſt with all that's fine,
Are pleas'd with verſe, tho' ſuch as mine;
As poets us'd in ancient times,
I'll make my preſents all in rhymes;
5. And leſt you ſhou'd forget their worth,
Like them I'll ſet their value forth.

6. Not monumental braſs or ſtones,
The guardians of heroic bones,
Not victories won by MARLBRO's ſword,
Nor titles which theſe feats record,
Such glories o'er the dead diffuſe,
As can the labours of the muſe.
7. But if ſhe ſhou'd her aid deny,
With you your virtues all muſt die,
Nor tongues unborn ſhall ever ſay
How wiſe, how good, was lady GREY.

8. What now had been th' ignoble doom
Of him who built imperial ROME?
Or him deſerving ten times more,
Who fed the hungry, cloth'd the poor,
Clear'd ſtreams, and bridges laid acroſs,
And built the little church of Ross?
Did not th' eternal powers of verſe
From age to age their deeds rehearſe.

9. The

Dignum laude virum Musa vetat mori,
Cœlo musa beat: sic Jovis interest
Optatis epulis impiger Hercules
Clarum Tyndaridæ sidus ab infimis
Quassas eripiunt æquoribus rates.
Ornatus viridi tempora pampino
Liber vota bonos ducit ad exitus.

9. The muſe forbids the brave to die,
Beſtowing immortality;
10. Still by her aid in bleſt abodes
ALCIDES feaſts among the Gods;
And royal ARTHUR ſtill is able
To fill his hoſpitable table
With Engliſh beef, and Engliſh knights,
And looks with pity down on WHITE's.

To the Hon. Miſs YORKE, *on her Marriage to Lord* ANSON.

VICTORIOUS Anſon ſee returns
From the ſubjected main!
With joy each Britiſh boſom burns,
O'erlooks of FRANCE and SPAIN.

Honours his grateful Sovereign's hand,
Conqueſt his own beſtows,
Applauſe unfeign'd his native land,
Unenvy'd wealth her foes.

But ſtill, my ſon, BRITANNIA cries,
Still more thy merits claim;
Thy deeds deſerve a richer prize,
Than titles, wealth, or fame:

Twice wafted ſafe from pole to pole
Th' haſt ſail'd the globe around;
Contains it ought can charm thy ſoul?
Thy fondeſt wiſhes bound?

Is there a treaſure worth thy care
Within th' inciroling line?
Say, and I'll ſtorm heav'n with my prayers
To make that treaſure thine.

Heav'n liſten'd to BRITANNIA's voice,
Agreed that more was due:
He choſe ——— the gods approv'd his choice,
And pay'd him all in YOU.

CHLOE *to* STREPHON.

A SONG.

TOO plain, dear youth, theſe tell-tale eyes
My heart your own declare;
But for heav'n's ſake let it ſuffice,
You reign triumphant there.

Forbear your utmoſt pow'r to try,
Nor farther urge your ſway;
Preſs not for what I muſt deny,
For fear I ſhou'd obey.

Could all your arts ſucceſsful prove,
Wou'd you a maid undo?
Whoſe greateſt failing is her love,
And that her love for you.

Say, would you uſe that very pow'r
You from her fondneſs claim,
To ruin, in one fatal hour,
All life of ſpotleſs fame?

Ah! ceaſe, my dear, to do an ill,
Becauſe perhaps you may;
But rather try your utmoſt ſkill
To ſave me, than betray.

Be you yourſelf my virtue's guard,
Defend, and not purſue;
Since 'tis a taſk for me too hard,
To fight with love and you.

A SONG.

CEASE, SALLY, thy charms to expand,
All thy arts and thy witchcraft forbear;
Hide thoſe eyes, hide that neck and that hand,
And thoſe ſweet flowing treſſes of hair.

Oh! torture me not for Love's ſake,
With the ſmirk of thoſe delicate lips,
With that head's dear ſignificant ſhake,
And the toſs of the hoop and the hips.

Oh!

Oh! ſight ſtill more fatal! look there
O'er her tucker what murderers peep!
So —— now there's an end of my care,
I ſhall never more eat, drink, or ſleep.

D'you ſing too? ah miſchievous thought!
Touch me, touch me not there any more;
Who the devil can 'ſcape being caught
In a trap that's thus baited all o'er?

But why to adviſe ſhou'd I try?
What nature ordains we muſt prove;
You no more can help charming, than I
Can help being charm'd, and in love.

A SONG.

WHEN firſt I ſought fair CÆLIA's love,
And ev'ry charm was new,
I ſwore by all the gods above
To be for ever true.

But long in vain did I adore,
Long wept and ſigh'd in vain,
She ſtill proteſted, vow'd, and ſwore,
She ne'er would eaſe my pain.

At laſt o'ercome ſhe made me bleſt,
And yielded all her charms,
And I forſook her when poſſeſt,
And fled to others arms.

But let not this, dear CÆLIA, now
To rage thy breaſt incline;
For why, ſince you forget your vow,
Shou'd I remember mine?

The CHOICE,

HAD I, PYGMALION like, the pow'r
To make the nymph I wou'd adore;
The model ſhou'd be thus deſign'd,
Like this her form, like this her mind.

Her ſkin ſhou'd be as lilies fair,
With roſy cheeks and jetty hair,
Her lips with pure vermilion ſpread,
And ſoft and moiſt, as well as red;
Her eyes ſhou'd ſhine with vivid light
At once both languiſhing, and bright;
Her ſhape ſhou'd be exact and ſmall,
Her ſtature rather low than tall;
Her limbs well turn'd, her air and mien
At once both ſprightly and ſerene;
Beſides all this, a nameleſs grace
Shou'd be diffus'd all o'er her face;

To

To make the lovely piece complete,
Not only beautiful, but ſweet.

This for her form; now for her mind;
I'd have it open, gen'rous, kind,
Void of all coquettiſh arts,
And vain deſigns of conquering hearts,
Not ſway'd by any views of gain,
Nor fond of giving others pain;
But ſoft, tho' bright, like her own eyes,
Diſcreetly witty, gayly wiſe.

I'd have her ſkill'd in ev'ry art
That can engage a wand'ring heart;
Know all the ſciences of love,
Yet ever willing to improve;
To preſs the hand, and roll the eye,
And drop ſometimes an amorous ſigh,
To lengthen out the balmy kiſs,
And heighten ev'ry tender bliſs;
And yet I'd have the charmer be
By nature only taught,—or me.

I'd have her to ſtrict honour ty'd,
And yet without one ſpark of pride;
In company well dreſt and fine,
Yet not ambitious to outſhine;
In private always neat and clean,
And quite a ſtranger to the ſpleen;

Well-pleas'd to grace the park, and play,
And dance ſometimes the night away,
But oftner fond to ſpend her hours
In ſolitude, and shady bow'rs,
And there beneath ſome ſilent grove,
Delight in poetry, and love.

Some ſparks of the poetick fire
I fain would have her ſoul inſpire,
Enough, at leaſt, to let her know
What joys from love and virtue flow;
Enough, at leaſt, to make her wiſe,
And fops, and fopperies deſpiſe;
Prefer her books, and her own muſe
To viſits, ſcandal, chat, and news;
Above her ſex exalt her mind,
And make her more than woman-kind.

To a young LADY, *going to the* WEST-INDIES.

FOR univerſal ſway deſign'd
To diſtant realms CLORINDA flies,
And ſcorns, in one ſmall iſle confin'd,
To bound the conqueſts of her eyes.

From

From our cold climes to INDIA's ſhore
With cruel haſte ſhe wings her way,
To ſcorch their ſultry plains ſtill more,
And rob us of our only day.

Whilſt ev'ry ſtreaming eye o'erflows
With tender floods of parting tears,
Thy breaſt, dear cauſe of all our woes,
Alone unmov'd, and gay appears.

But ſtill, if right the muſes tell,
The fated point of time is nigh,
When grief ſhall that fair boſom ſwell,
And trickle from thy lovely eye.

Tho' now, like PHILIP's ſon, whoſe arms
Did once the vaſſal world command,
You rove with unreſiſted charms,
And conquer both by ſea and land;

Yet (when as ſoon they muſt) mankind
Shall all be doom'd to wear your chain,
You too, like him, will weep to find
No more unconquer'd worlds remain.

CHLOE Angling.

ON yon fair brook's enamell'd ſide
Behold my CHLOE ſtands!
Her angle trembles o'er the tide,
As conſcious of her hands.

Calm as the gentle waves appear,
Her thoughts ſerenely flow,
Calm, as the ſoftly breathing air,
That curls the brook below.

Such charms her ſparkling eyes diſcloſe,
With ſuch ſoft pow'r endu'd,
She ſeems a new-born VENUS roſe
From the tranſparent flood.

From each green bank, and moſſy cave,
The ſcaly race repair,
They ſport beneath the cryſtal wave,
And kiſs her image there.

Here the bright ſilver eel enroll'd
In ſhining volumes lies,
There baſks the carp bedropt with gold
In the ſunſhine of her eyes.

With hungry pikes in wanton play
The tim'rous trouts appear,
The hungry pikes forget to prey,
The tim'rous trouts to fear.

With equal haſte the thoughtleſs crew
To the fair tempter fly,
Nor grieve they, whilſt her eyes they view,
That by her hand they die.

Thus I too view'd the nymph of late,
Ah ſimple fiſh beware!
Soon will you find my wretched fate,
And ſtruggle in the ſnare.

But, fair-one, tho' theſe toils ſucceed,
Of conqueſt be not vain,
Nor think e'er all the ſcaly breed
Unpuniſh'd thus to reign.

Remember in a wat'ry glaſs
His charms NARCISSUS ſpy'd,
When for his own bewitching face
The youth deſpair'd and dy'd.

No more then harmleſs fiſh inſnare,
No more ſuch wiles purſue;
Leſt, whilſt you baits for them prepare,
LOVE finds out one for you.

CHLOE

CHLOE Hunting.

WHILST thousands court fair CHLOE's love,
She fears the dang'rous joy,
But, CYNTHIA like, frequents the grove,
As lovely, and as coy.

With the ſame ſpeed ſhe ſeeks the hind,
Or hunts the flying hare,
She leaves purſuing ſwains behind,
To languiſh and deſpair.

Oh ſtrange caprice in thy dear breaſt!
Whence firſt this whim began;
To follow thus each worthleſs beaſt,
And ſhun their ſovereign man!

Conſider, fair, what 'tis you do;
How thus they both muſt die,
Not ſurer they, when you purſue,
Than we whene'er you fly.

On

On LUCINDA's Recovery from the SMALL-POX.

WITH BRIGHT VENUS long with envious eyes
The fair LUCINDA's charms had ſeen,
And ſhall ſhe ſtill, the goddeſs cries,
Thus dare to rival Beauty's queen!

She ſpoke, and to th' infernal plains
With cruel haſte indignant goes,
Where Death the prince of terrors reigns
Amidſt diſeaſes, pains, and woes.

To him her pray'rs ſhe thus applies:
O ſole in whom my hopes confide!
To blaſt my rival's potent eyes,
And in her fate all mortal pride:

Let her but feel thy chilling dart;
I will forgive, tremendous god,
Ev'n that which pierc'd ADONIS' heart:
He hears, and gives th' aſſenting nod.

Then calling forth a fierce DISEASE
Impatient for the beauteous prey,
Bids him the lovelieſt fabrick ſeize
The gods e'er form'd of human clay.

Aſſur'd he meant LUCINDA's charms,
To her th' infectious *demon* flies,
Her neck, her cheeks, her lips diſarms,
And of their lightning robs her eyes.

The Cyprian queen with cruel joy
Beholds her rival's charms o'erthrown,
Nor doubts, like mortal fair, t'employ
Their ruins to augment her own.

From out the ſpoils of ev'ry grace
The goddeſs picks ſome glorious prize,
Tranſplants the roſes from her face,
And arms young CUPID from her eyes.

Now DEATH (ah veil the mournful ſcene!)
Had in one moment pierc'd her heart,
Had kinder FATE not ſtept between,
And turn'd aſide th' uplifted dart.

What frenzy bids thy hand eſſay,
He cries, to wound thy ſureſt friend,
Whoſe beauties to thy realms each day
Such num'rous crowds of victims ſend?

Are not her eyes, where-e'er they aim,
As thine own ſilent arrows ſure?
Or who that once has felt their flame,
Dar'd e'er indulge one hope of cure?

DEATH

DEATH thus reprov'd his hand reſtrains,
And bids the dire diſtemper fly;
The cruel beauty lives, and reigns,
That thouſands may adore, and die.

Written in Mr. LOCKE's *Eſſay on Human Underſtanding.*

LONG had the mind of man with curious art
Search'd nature's wond'rous plan thro' ev'ry part,
Meaſur'd each tract of ocean, earth, and ſky,
And number'd all the rolling orbs on high;
Yet ſtill, ſo learn'd, herſelf ſhe little knew,
'Till LOCKE's unerring pen the portrait drew.

So beauteous EVE, a while in Eden ſtray'd,
And all her great Creator's works ſurvey'd;
By ſun, and moon, ſhe knew to mark the hour,
She knew the genius of each plant and flow'r;
She knew, when ſporting on the verdant lawn,
The tender lambkin, and the nimble fawn:
But ſtill a ſtranger to her own bright face,
She gueſs'd not at its form, nor what ſhe was;
'Till led at length to ſome clear fountain's ſide,
She view'd her beauties in the cryſtal tide;
The ſhining mirror all her charms diſplays,
And her eyes catch their own rebounded rays.

Written

Written in a LADY's *Volume of* TRAGEDIES.

SINCE thou, relentleſs maid, can'ſt daily hear
Thy ſlave's complaints without one ſigh or tear,
Why beats thy breaſt, or thy bright eyes o'erflow
At theſe imaginary ſcenes of woe?
Rather teach theſe to weep and that to heave,
At real pains themſelves to thouſands give;
And if ſuch pity to feign'd love is due,
Conſider how much more you owe to true.

CUPID reliev'd.

AS once young CUPID went aſtray
The little god I found;
I took his bow and ſhafts away,
And faſt his pinions bound.

At CHLOE's feet my ſpoils I caſt,
My conqueſt proud to ſhew;
She ſaw his godſhip fetter'd faſt,
And ſmil'd to ſee him ſo.

But

But ah! that ſmile ſuch freſh ſupplies
Of arms reſiſtleſs gave!
I'm forc'd again to yield my prize,
And fall again his ſlave.

The WAY to be WISE.

Imitated from LA FONTAINE.

POOR JENNY, am'rous, young, and gay,
Having by man been led aſtray,
To nun'ry dark retir'd;
There liv'd, and look'd ſo like a maid,
So ſeldom eat, ſo often pray'd,
She was by all admir'd.

The lady ABBESS oft would cry,
If any ſiſter trod awry,
Or prov'd an idle flattern;
See wiſe, and pious Mrs. JANE,
A life ſo ſtrict, ſo grave a mien
Is ſure a worthy pattern.

A pert young ſlut at length replies,
Experience, madam, makes folks wiſe,
'Tis that has made her ſuch;
And we, poor ſouls, no doubt ſhou'd be
As pious, and as wiſe, as ſhe,
If we had ſeen as much.

The SNOW-BALL.

From PETRONIUS ARBANIUS.

WHITE as her hand fair JULIA threw
A ball of ſilver ſnow;
The frozen globe fir'd as it flew,
My boſom felt it glow.

Strange pow'r of love! whoſe great command
Can thus a ſnow-ball arm;
When ſent, fair JULIA from thine hand,
Ev'n ice itſelf can warm.

How ſhould we then ſecure our hearts?
Love's pow'r we all muſt feel,
Who thus can, by ſtrange magick arts,
In ice his flames conceal.

'Tis thou alone, fair JULIA, know,
Canſt quench my fierce deſire,
But not with water, ice, or ſnow,
But with an equal fire.

ANACREON,

ANACREON, Ode XX.

A Rock on Phrygian plains we ſee
That once was beauteous NIOBE;
And PROCNE, too revengeful fair!
Now flits a wand'ring bird in air;
Thus I a looking-glaſs wou'd be,
That you, dear maid, might gaze on me;
Be chang'd to ſtays, that ſtraitly lac'd,
I might embrace thy ſlender waiſt;
A ſilver ſtream I'd bathe thee, fair,
Or ſhine pomatum on thy hair;
In a ſoft ſable's tippet's form
I'd kiſs thy ſnowy bubbies warm;
In ſhape of pearl thy boſom deck,
And hang for ever round thy neck:
Pleas'd, to be ought, that touches you,
Your glove, your garter, or your ſhoe.

A Tranſlation of ſome LATIN VERSES *on the* CAMERA OBSCURA.

THE various pow'rs of blended ſhade, and light,
The ſkilful Zeuxis of the duſky night,
The lovely forms, that paint the ſnowy plain
Free from the pencil's violating ſtain,
In tuneful lines harmonious Priogues ſing,
At once of light, and verſe celeſtial king.

Divine Arouet! let thy ſacred fire
Thy youthful bard's unſkilful breaſt inſpire,
Like the fair empty ſheet he hangs to view,
Void, and unfurniſh'd, till inſpir'd by you
O let one beam, one kind enlightning ray
At once upon his mind, and paper play!
Hence ſhall his breaſt with bright ideas glow,
Hence num'rous forms the ſilver field ſhall ſtrow.

But now the muſe's uſeful precepts view,
And with juſt care the pleaſing work purſue.
Firſt chuſe a window that convenient lyes,
And to the north directs the wand'ring eyes,
Darke be the room, let not a ſtraggling ray
Intrude, to chaſe the ſhadowy forms away.

Except one bright, refulgent blaze convey'd,
Thro' a ſtrait paſſage in the ſhutter made,
In which th' ingenious artiſt firſt muſt place
A little, convex, round, tranſparent glaſs,
And juſt behind, th' extended paper lay
On which his art ſhall all its pow'r diſplay:
There rays reflected from all parts ſhall meet,
And paint their objects on the ſilver ſheet;
A thouſand forms ſhall in a moment riſe,
And magick landſkips charm our wand'ring eyes,
'Tis thus from every object that we view,
If EPICURUS' doctrine teaches true,
The ſubtile parts upon our organs play,
And to our minds th' external forms convey.

But from what cauſes all theſe wonders flow,
'Tis not permitted idle bards to know,
How thro' the center of the convex glaſs,
The piercing rays together twiſted paſs,
Or why reverſ'd the lovely ſcenes appear,
Or why the ſun's approaching light they fear,
Let grave philoſophers the cauſe enquire,
Enough for us to ſee, and to admire.

See then what forms with various colours ſtain
The painted ſurface of the paper plain!
Now bright, and gay, as ſhines the heav'nly bow,
So late a wide, unpeopled waſte of ſnow:
Here verdant groves, there golden crops of corn
The new unculturated fields adorn,

Here gardens deckt with flow'rs of various dyes,
There ſlender tow'rs, and little cities riſe:
But all with tops inverted downward bend,
Earth mounts aloft, and ſkies and clouds deſcend.
Thus the wiſe vulgar on a pendent land
Imagine our antipodes to ſtand,
And wonder much, how they ſecurely go,
And not fall headlong on the heav'ns below.

The charms of motion here exalt each part
Above the reach of great APELLES' art;
Zephyrs the waving harveſt gently blow,
The waters curl, and brooks inceſſant flow;
Men, beaſts, and birds in fair confuſion ſtray,
Some riſe to fight, whilſt others paſs away.

On all we ſeize that comes within our reach,
The rolling coach we ſtop, the horſe-man catch;
Compel the poſting traveller to ſtay;
But the ſhort viſit cauſes no delay.

Again, behold what lovely proſpects riſe!
Now with the loveliеſt feaſt your longing eyes,
Nor let ſtrict modeſty be here afraid,
To view upon her head a beauteous maid:
See in ſmall folds her waving garments flow,
And all her ſlender limbs ſtill ſtand or grow;
Contracted in one little orb is found
The ſpacious hoop, once five yard ells around;
But think not to embrace the flying fair,
Soon will ſhe quit your arms unſeen as air,

In

In this reſembling too a tender maid,
Coy to the lover's touch, and of his hand afraid.

Enough w' have ſeen, now let th' intruding day
Chaſe all the lovely magic ſcenes away;
Again th' unpeopled ſnowy waſte returns,
And the lone plain its faded glories mourns,
The bright creation in a moment flies,
And all the pigmy generation dies.

Thus, when ſtill night her gloomy mantle ſpreads,
The fairies dance around the flow'ry meads!
But when the day returns, they wing their flight
To diſtant lands, and ſhun th' unwelcome light.

The TEMPLE *of* VENUS.

IN her own iſle's remoteſt grove
Stands VENUS' lovely ſhrine,
Sacred to beauty, joy, and love,
And built by hands divine.

The poliſh'd ſtructure, fair and bright
As her own ivory ſkin,
Without is alabaſter white,
And ruby all within.

Above, a cupola charms the view,
White as unſully'd ſnow;
Two columns of the ſame fair hue
Support the dome below.

Its walls a trickling fountain laves,
In which ſuch virtue reigns,
That, bath'd in its balſamic waves,
No lover feels his pains.

Before th' unfolding gates there ſpreads
A fragrant ſpicy grove,
That with it's curling branches ſhades
The labyrinths of Love.

Bright Beauty here her captives holds,
Who kiſs their eaſy chains,
And in ſofteſt cloſeſt folds
Her willing ſlaves detains.

Would'ſt thou, who ne'er theſe ſeas haſt try'd,
Find where this iſland lies,
Let pilot Love the rudder guide,
And ſteer by CHLOE's eyes.

On a NOSEGAY *in the Counteſs of* COVENTRY'S *Breaſt.*

In Imitation of WALLER.

DElightful ſcene! in which appear
At once all beauties of the year!
See how the Zephyrs of her breath
Fan gently all the flow'rs beneath!
See the gay flow'rs, how bright they glow,
Tho' planted in a bed of ſnow!
Yet ſee how ſoon they fade, and die,
Scorch'd by the ſunſhine of her eye!
No wonder if, o'ercome with bliſs,
They droop their heads to ſteal a kiſs;
Who would not die on that dear breaſt?
Who would not die to be ſo bleſt?

The 'SQUIRE and the PARSON.

An ECLOGUE.

Written on the Concluſion of the Peace, 1748.

BY his hall chimney, where in ruſty grate
Green faggots wept their own untimely fate,
In elbow-chair, the penſive 'ſquire reclin'd,
Revolving debts and taxes in his mind:
A pipe juſt fill'd upon a table near
Lay by the London-Evening ſtain'd with beer,
With half a bible, on whoſe remnants torn
Each pariſh round was annually forſworn.
The gate now claps, as ev'ning juſt grew dark,
Tray ſtarts, and with a growl prepares to bark;
But ſoon diſcerning with ſagacious noſe,
The well-known ſavour of the parſon's toes,
Lays down his head, and ſinks in ſoft repoſe:
The doctor ent'ring, to the tankard ran,
Takes a good hearty pull, and thus began:

PARSON.

Why ſit'ſt thou, thus forlorn and dull, my friend,
Now war's rapacious reign is at an end?
Hark, how the diſtant bells inſpire delight!
See bonfires ſpangle o'er the veil of night!

'SQUIRE.

'SQUIRE.

What's peace, alas! in foreign parts to me?
At home, nor peace, nor plenty can I ſee;
Joyleſs, I hear drums, bells, and fiddles ſound,
'Tis all the ſame—Four ſhillings in the pound.
My wheels, tho' old, are clog'd with a new tax;
My oaks, tho' young, muſt groan beneath the axe;
My barns are half unthatch'd, untyl'd my houſe,
Loſt by this fatal ſickneſs all my cows:
See there's the bill my late damn'd lawſuit coſt!
Long as the land contended for,—and loſt:
Ev'n Ormond's head I can frequent no more,
So ſhort my pocket is, ſo long the ſcore;
At ſhops all round I owe for fifty things.—
This comes of fetching Hanoverian kings.

PARSON.

I muſt confeſs the times are bad indeed,
No wonder; when we ſcarce believe our creed;
When purblind reaſon's deem'd the ſureſt guide,
And heav'n-born faith at her tribunal try'd;
When all church-pow'r is thought to make men ſlaves,
Saints, martyrs, fathers, all call'd fools, and knaves.

'SQUIRE.

Come, preach no more, but drink, and hold your tongue:
I'm for the church—but think the parſons wrong.

PARSON.

PARSON.

See there! free-thinking now ſo rank is grown,
It ſpreads infection thro' each country town;
Deiſtic ſcoffs fly round at rural boards,
'Squires, and their tenants too, profane as lords,
Vent impious jokes on every ſacred thing;

'SQUIRE.

Come drink;——

PARSON.

Here's to you then, to church and king:

'SQUIRE.

Here's church and king; I hate the glaſs ſhou'd ſtand,
Tho' one takes tythes, and t'other taxes land.

PARSON.

Heav'n with new plagues will ſcourge this ſinful nation,
Unleſs we ſoon repeal the toleration,
And to the church reſtore the convocation:

'SQUIRE.

Plagues we ſhou'd feel ſufficient, on my word,
Starv'd by two houſes, prieſt-rid by a third.
For better days we lately had a chance,
Had not the honeſt Plaids been trick'd by France.

PARSON.

PARSON.

Is not moſt gracious GEORGE, our faith's defender?
You love the church, yet wiſh for the pretender!

'SQUIRE.

Preferment, I ſuppoſe, is what you mean;
Turn whig, and you, perhaps, may be a dean:
But you muſt firſt learn how to treat your betters.
What's here? ſure ſome ſtrange news, a boy with letters;
Oh, ho! here's one, I ſee, from parſon SLY:
"My rev'rend neighbour SQUAB being like to die;
"I hope, if heav'n ſhould pleaſe to take him hence,
"To aſk the living wou'd be no offence."

PARSON.

Have you not ſwore, that I ſhou'd SQUAB ſucceed?
Think how for this I taught your ſons to read;
How oft diſcover'd puſs on new-plow'd land,
How oft ſupported you with friendly hand;
When I cou'd ſcarcely go, nor cou'd your worſhip ſtand.

'SQUIRE.

'Twas yours, had you been honeſt, wiſe, or civil;
Now ev'n go court the biſhops or the devil.

PARSON.

If I meant any thing, now let me die;
I'm blunt, and cannot fawn and cant, not I;
Like that old Preſbyterian raſcal SLY.

I am

I am, you know, a right true-hearted tory,
Love a good glaſs, a merry ſong, or ſtory.

'SQUIRE.

Thou art an honeſt dog, that's truth indeed—
Talk no more nonſenſe then about the creed.
I can't, I think, deny thy firſt requeſt;
'Tis thine; but firſt a bumper to the beſt.

PARSON.

Moſt noble 'Squire, more gen'rous than your wine;
How pleaſing's the condition you aſſign?
Give me the ſparkling glaſs, and here, d'ye ſee,
With joy I drink it on my bended knee:
Great queen! who governeſt this earthly ball,
And mak'ſt both kings, and kingdoms, riſe and fall;
Whoſe wond'rous pow'r in ſecret all things rules,
Makes fools of mighty peers, and peers of fools;
Diſpenſes mitres, coronets, and ſtars;
Involves far diſtant realms in bloody wars;
Then bids the ſnaky treſſes ceaſe to hiſs,
And gives them peace again—* nay gav'ſt us this:
Whoſe health does health to all mankind impart,
Here's to thy much-lov'd health:

'SQUIRE, *rubbing his hands.*

——With all my heart.

* Madam de P—mp—dour.

ON

ON THE

IMMORTALITY

OF THE

SOUL.

Tranſlated from the Latin of

ISAAC HAWKINS BROWNE, Eſq;

ON THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

ON THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

Tranſlated from the Latin of

ISAAC HAWKINS BROWNE, Eſq;

BOOK I.

TO all inferior animals 'tis giv'n
T' enjoy the ſtate allotted them by Heav'n;
No vain reſearches e'er diſturb their reſt,
No fears of dark futurity moleſt.
Man, only Man, ſolicitous to know
The ſprings whence Nature's operations flow,
Plods thro' a dreary waſte with toil and pain,
And reaſons, hopes, and thinks, and lives in vain;
For fable Death ſtill hov'ring o'er his head,
Cuts ſhort his progreſs, with his vital thread.

Wherefore, ſince Nature errs not, do we find
Theſe ſeeds of Science in the human mind,
If no congenial fruits are predeſign'd?
For what avails to man this pow'r to roam
Thro' ages paſt, and ages yet to come,
T' explore new worlds o'er all th' ætherial way,
Chain'd to a ſpot, and living but a day?
Since all muſt periſh in one common grave,
Nor can theſe long laborious ſearches ſave
Were it not wiſer far, ſupinely laid,
To ſport with Phillis in the noontide ſhade?
Or at thy jovial feſtivals appear,
Great Bacchus, who alone the ſoul can clear,
From all that it has felt, and all that it can fear?

Come on then, let us feaſt: let Chloe ſing,
And ſoft Neæra touch the trembling ſtring;
Enjoy the preſent hour, nor ſeek to know
What good or ill to-morrow may beſtow.
But theſe delights ſoon pall upon the taſte;
Let's try then if more ſerious cannot laſt:
Wealth let us heap on wealth, or fame purſue,
Let pow'r and glory be our points in view;
In courts, in camps, in ſenates let us live,
Our levees crowded like the buzzing hive:
Each weak attempt the ſame ſad leſſon brings!
Alas, what vanity in human things!

What means then ſhall we try? where hope to find
A friendly harbour for the reſtleſs mind?

ſtill, you ſee, impatient to obtain
vledge immenſe, (ſo Nature's laws ordain)
now, tho' fetter'd in corporeal clay,
bs ſtep by ſtep the proſpect to ſurvey,
ſeeks unweary'd Truth's eternal ray.
ecting joys ſhe aſks which muſt depend
ıe frail ſenſes, and with them muſt end;
uch as ſuit her own immortal fame,
from all change eternally the ſame.

ıke courage then, theſe joys we ſhall attain;
ghty wiſdom never acts in vain;
ſhall the ſoul on which it has beſtow'd
pow'rs e'er periſh like an earthly clod;
ɔurg'd at length from foul corruption's ſtain,
l from her priſon and unbound her chain,
hall her native ſtrength, and native ſkies regain:
ıeav'n an old inhabitant return,
draw nectareous ſtreams from truth's perpetual
urn.

hilſt life remains, (if life it can be call'd
dſt in fleſhly bondage thus enthrall'd)
l with the dull purſuit of worldly things,
ſoul ſcarce wakes, or opes her gladſome wings,
till the godlike exile in diſgrace
ns ſome marks of her celeſtial race;
whence from mem'ry's ſtore can ſhe produce
various thoughts, or range them ſo for uſe?

Can matter theſe contain, diſpoſe, apply?
Can in her cells ſuch mighty treaſures lye?
Or can her native force produce them to the eye?

Whence is this pow'r, this foundreſs of all arts,
Serving, adorning life, thro' all its parts,
Which names impos'd, by letters mark'd thoſe names
Adjuſted properly by legal claims,
From woods and wilds collected rude mankind,
And cities, laws, and governments deſign'd?
What can this be, but ſome bright ray from heav'n,
Some emanation from Omniſcience given?

When now the rapid ſtream of Eloquence
Bears all before it, paſſion, reaſon, ſenſe,
Can, its dread thunder, or its lightning's force,
Derive their eſſence from a mortal ſource?
What think you of the bard's enchanting art,
Which, whether he attempts to warm the heart,
With fabled ſcenes, or charm the ear with rhyme,
Breathes all pathetic, lovely, and ſublime?
Whilſt things on earth roll round from age to age,
The ſame dull force repeated on the ſtage;
The poet gives us a creation new,
More pleaſing, and more perfect than the true;
The mind, who always to perfection haſtes,
Perfection, ſuch as here ſhe never taſtes,
With gratitude accepts the kind deceit,
And ſhance foreſees a ſyſtem more compleat.

ſe what think you, who the circling race
s, and their revolving planets trace,
mets journeying thro' unbounded ſpace?
n you doubt, but that th' all-ſearching ſoul,
ow can traverſe heav'n from pole to pole,
hence deſcending viſits but this earth,
all once more regain the regions of her birth?

d ſhe thus act, unleſs ſome Power unknown,
natter quite diſtinct and all her own,
ted, and impell'd her? She approves
ıſcious, and condemns; ſhe hates, and loves;
s, and rejoices, hopes, and is afraid,
it the body's unrequeſted aid:
n internal ſtrength her reaſon guides,
ſhe now compares things, now divides;
; ſcatter'd fragments piece by piece collects,
; and thence her edifice erects;
ts on arts, effects to cauſes ties,
ars th' aſpiring fabric to the ſkies:
vhence, as on a diſtant plain below,
s from cauſes conſequences flow,
e whole chain diſtinctly comprehends,
from the Almighty's throne to earth deſcends:
ſtly, turning inwardly her eyes,
es how all her own ideas riſe,
xplates what ſhe is, and whence ſhe came,
moſt comprehends her own amazing frame.
re machines be with ſuch pow'rs endu'd,
ſcious of thoſe pow'rs, ſuppoſe they cou'd?

For body is but a machine alone
Mov'd by external force, and impulſe not its own.

Rate not th' extenſion of the human mind
By the Plebeian ſtandard of mankind,
But by the ſize of thoſe gigantic few,
Whom *Greece* and *Rome* ſtill offer to our view;
Or *Britain* well-deſerving equal praiſe,
Parent of heroes too in better days.
Why ſhou'd I try her num'rous ſons to name
By verſe, law, eloquence conſign'd to fame?
Or who have forc'd fair Science into ſight
Long loſt in darkneſs, and afraid of light.
O'er all ſuperior, like the ſolar ray,
Firſt *Bacon* uſher'd in the dawning day,
And drove the miſts of ſophiſtry away;
Pervaded nature with amazing force,
Following experience ſtill throughout his courſe,
And finiſhing at length his deſtin'd way
To *Newton* he bequeath'd the radiant lamp of day.

Illuſtrious ſouls! if any tender cares
Affect angelic breaſts for man's affairs,
If in your preſent happy heav'nly ſtate,
You're not regardleſs quite of *Britain*'s fate,
Let this degenerate land again be bleſt
With that true vigour which ſhe once poſſeſt;
Compel us to unfold our ſlumb'ring eyes
And to our ancient dignity to riſe.

Such wond'rous pow'rs as theſe muſt ſure be giv'n
For moſt important purpoſes by heav'n;
Who bids theſe ſtars as bright examples ſhine
Beſprinkled thinly by the hand divine,
To form to virtue each degenerate time,
And point out to the ſoul its origin ſublime.
That there's a ſelf which after death ſhall live,
All are concern'd about, and all believe;
That ſomething's ours, when we from life depart,
This all conceive, all feel it at the heart;
The wiſe of learn'd antiquity proclaim
This truth, the public voice declares the ſame;
No land ſo rude but looks beyond the tomb
For future proſpects in a world to come.
Hence, without hopes to be in life repaid,
We plant ſlow oaks poſterity to ſhade;
And hence vaſt pyramids aſpiring high
Lift their proud heads aloft, and time defy.
Hence is our love of fame, a love ſo ſtrong,
We think no dangers great, or labors long,
By which we hope our beings to extend,
And to remoteſt times in glory to deſcend.

For fame the wretch beneath the gallows lies,
Diſowning ev'ry crime for which he dies;
Of life profuſe, tenacious of a name,
Fearleſs of death, and yet afraid of ſhame.
Nature has wove into the human mind
This anxious care for names we leave behind,
T' extend our narrow views beyond the tomb,
And give an earneſt of a life to come:

For if when dead, we are but duſt or clay,
Why think of what poſterity ſhall ſay?
Her praiſe or cenſure cannot us concern,
Nor ever penetrate the ſilent urn.

What mean the nodding plumes, the fun'ral tra
And marble monument that ſpeaks in vain,
With all thoſe cares which ev'ry nation pays
To their unfeeling dead in different ways!
Some the flower-ſtrewn grave the corpſe have lay'd
And annual obſequies around it pay'd,
As if to pleaſe the poor departed ſhade;
Others on blazing piles the body burn,
And ſtore their aſhes in the faithful urn;
But all in one great principle agree
To give a fancy'd Immortality.
Why ſhou'd I mention thoſe, whoſe ouzy ſoil
Is render'd fertile by th' o'erflowing *Nile*,
Their dead they bury not, nor burn with fires,
No graves they dig, erect no fun'ral pires,
But waſhing firſt th' embowel'd body clean,
Gums, ſpice, and melted pitch they pour within;
Then with ſtrong fillets bind it round and round,
To make each flaccid part compact and ſound;
And laſtly paint the varniſh'd ſurface o'er
With the ſame features, which in life it wore:
So ſtrong their preſage of a future ſtate,
And that our nobler part ſurvives the body's fate.

Nations behold remote from reaſon's beams,
Where *Indian Ganges* rolls his ſandy ſtreams,

Because

Of life impatient ruſh into the fire,
And willing victims to their gods expire!
Perſuaded the loos'd ſoul to regions flies,
Bleſt with eternal ſpring, and cloudleſs skies.

Nor is leſs fam'd the oriental wife:
For ſtedfaſt virtue, and contempt of life!
These heroines mourn not with loud female cries
Their husbands left, or with o'erflowing eyes.
But, ſtrange to tell! their funeral piles aſcend,
And in the ſame ſad flames their ſorrows end;
In hopes with them beneath the ſhades to rove,
And there renew their interrupted love.

In climes where *Boreas* breathes eternal cold,
See num'rous nations, warlike, fierce, and bold,
To battle all unanimouſly run,
Nor fire, nor ſword, nor inſtant death they ſhun.
Whence this diſdain of life in ev'ry breaſt,
But from a notion on their minds impreſt,
That all who for their country die, are bleſt.
Add too to theſe the once prevailing dreams,
Of ſweet *Elyſian* groves, and *Stygian* ſtreams:
All ſhew with what conſent mankind agree
In the firm hope of Immortality.
Grant theſe, th' inventions of the crafty prieſt,
Yet ſuch inventions never cou'd ſubſiſt,
Unleſs ſome glimm'rings of a future ſtate,
Were with the mind coæval, and innate:
For ev'ry fiction, which can long perſuade,
In truth muſt have its firſt foundations laid.

Becauſe we are unable to conceive,
How unembody'd ſouls can act, and live,
The vulgar give them forms, and limbs, and faces,
And habitations in peculiar places;
Hence reas'ners more refin'd, but not more wiſe,
Struck with the glare of ſuch abſurdities,
Their whole exiſtence fabulous ſuſpect,
And truth and falſehood in a lump reject;
Too indolent to learn what may be known,
Or elſe too proud that ignorance to own.
For hard's the taſk the daubing to pervade
Folly and fraud on Truth's fair form have laid;
Yet let that taſk be our's; for great the prize;
Nor let us Truth's celeſtial charms deſpiſe,
Becauſe that prieſts or poets may diſguiſe.

That there's a God from Nature's voice is clear,
And yet what errors to this truth adhere?
How have the fears and follies of mankind
Now multiply'd their gods, and now ſubjoin'd
To each the frailties of the human mind?
Nay ſuperſtition ſpread at length ſo wide,
Beaſts, birds, and onions too were deify'd.

Th' *Athenian* ſage, revolving in his mind
This weakneſs, blindneſs, madneſs of mankind,
Foretold, that in maturer days, tho' late,
When Time ſhould ripen the decrees of Fate,
Some God would light us, like the riſing day,
Thro' errors maze, and chaſe theſe clouds away.

Long

Long ſince has time fulfill'd this great decree,
And brought us aid from this Divinity.

Well worth our ſearch diſcoveries may be made
By Nature, void of this celeſtial aid:
Let's try what her conjectures then can reach,
Nor ſcorn plain Reaſon, when ſhe deigns to teach.

That mind and body often ſympathize
Is plain; ſuch is this union nature ties:
But then as often too they diſagree,
Which proves the ſoul's ſuperior progeny.
Sometimes the body in full ſtrength we find,
Whilſt various ails debilitate the mind;
At others, whilſt the mind its force retains,
The body ſinks with ſickneſs and with pains:
Now did one common fate their beings end,
Alike they'd ſicken, and alike they'd mend.
But ſure experience, on the ſlighteſt view,
Shews us, that the reverſe of this is true;
For when the body oft expiring lies,
Its limbs quite ſenſeleſs, and half cloſ'd its eyes,
The mind new force and eloquence acquires,
And with prophetic voice the dying lips inſpires.

Of like materials were they both compos'd,
How comes it, that the mind, when ſleep has cloſ'd
Each avenue of ſenſe, expatiates wide
Her liberty reſtor'd, her bonds unty'd?
And like ſome bird who from its priſon flies,
Claps her exulting wings, and mounts the ſkies.

Grant

Grant that corporeal is the human mind,
It muſt have parts *in infinitum* join'd;
And each of theſe muſt will, perceive, deſign,
And draw confus'dly in a different line;
Which them can claim dominion o'er the reſt,
Or ſtamp the ruling paſſion in the breaſt?

Perhaps the mind is form'd by various arts
Of modelling and figuring theſe parts;
Juſt as if circles wiſer were than ſquares;
But ſurely common ſenſe aloud declares
That ſize and figure are as foreign quite
From mental pow'rs, as colours black or white.

Allow that motion is the cauſe of thought,
With what ſtrange pow'rs muſt motion then be fraught?
Reaſon, ſenſe, ſcience, muſt derive their ſource
From the wheel's rapid whirl, or pully's force;
Tops whip'd by ſchool-boys ſages muſt commence,
Their hoops, like them, be cudgel'd into ſenſe,
And boiling pots o'erflow with eloquence.
Whence can this very motion take its birth?
Not ſure from matter, from dull clods of earth;
But from a living ſpirit lodg'd within,
Which governs all the bodily machine:
Juſt as th' Almighty Univerſal Soul
Informs, directs, and animates the whole.

Ceaſe

Ceaſe then to wonder how th' immortal mind
Can live, when from the body quite disjoin'd;
But rather wonder, if ſhe e'er cou'd die,
So fram'd ſo faſhion'd for eternity;
Self-mov'd, ape form'd of parts together ty'd,
Which time can diſſipate, and force divide;
For beings of this make can never die,
Whoſe pow'rs within themſelves, and their own
eſſence lie.

If to conceive how any thing can be
From ſhape extracted and locality
Is hard, what think you of the Deity?
His Being not the leaſt relation bears,
As far as to the human mind appears,
To ſhape, or ſize, ſimilitude or place,
Cloath'd in no form, and bounded by no ſpace.
Such then is God, a Spirit pure refin'd
From all material droſs, and ſuch the human mind.
For in what part of eſſence can we ſee
More certain marks of Immortality?
Ev'n from this dark confinement with delight
She looks abroad, and prunes herſelf for flight,
Like an unwilling infant longs to roam
From this dull earth, and ſeek her native home.

Go then forgetful of its toil and ſtrife,
Purſue the joys of this fallacious life;

Like

Like some poor fly, who lives but for a day,
Sip the fresh dews, and in the sunshine play,
And into nothing then dissolve away;
Are these our great pursuits, is this to live?
These all the hopes this much loved world can give?
How much more wretch's envy is their fate,
Who search for truth in a superior state,
Not groping step by step, as we pursue,
And following reason's much entangled clue,
But with one great, and instantaneous view.

But how can sense remain, perhaps you'll say,
Corporeal organs if we take away!
Since it from them proceeds, and with them must
decay.
Why not? or why may not the soul receive
New organs, since ev'n art can these retrieve?
The silver trumpet aids th' obstructed ear,
And optic glasses the dim eye can clear.
These in mankind new faculties create,
And lift him far above his native state;
Call down revolving planets from the sky,
Earth's secret treasures open to his eye,
The whole minute creation make his own,
With all the wonders of a world unknown.

How cou'd the mind, did she alone depend
On sense, the errors of those senses mend?
Yet oft we see, those senses she corrects,
And oft their information quite rejects.

In diſtances of things, their ſhapes, and ſize,
Our reaſon judges better than our eyes.
Declares not this the ſoul's pre-eminence
Superior to, and quite diſtinct from, ſenſe?
For ſure 'tis likely, that, ſince now ſo high
Clog'd and unfledg'd ſhe dares her wings to try;
Loos'd and mature ſhe ſhall her ſtrength diſplay,
And ſoar at length to Truth's refulgent ray.

Inquire you how theſe pow'rs we ſhall attain,
'Tis not for us to know; our ſearch is vain:
Can any now remember or relate
How he exiſted in the embryo ſtate?
Or one from birth inſenſible of day
Conceive ideas of the ſolar ray?
That light's deny'd to him, which others ſee,
He knows, perhaps you'll ſay,—and ſo do we.

The mind contemplative finds nothing here
On earth that's worthy of a wiſh or fear:
He, whoſe ſublime purſuit is God and truth,
Burns, like ſome abſent and impatient youth,
To join the object of his warm deſires,
Thence to ſequeſter'd ſhades, and ſtreams retires,
And there delights his paſſion to rehearſe
In Wiſdom's ſacred voice, or in harmonious verſe.

To me moſt happy therefore he appears,
Who having once, unmov'd by hopes or fears,

Survey'd

Survey'd this ſun, earth, ocean, clouds, and flame,
Well-ſatisfy'd returns from whence he came.
Is life an hundred years, or e'er ſo few,
'Tis repetition all, and nothing new:
A fair where thouſands meet, but none can ſtay;
An inn, where travellers bait, then poſt away;
A ſea where man perpetually is toſt,
Now plung'd in buſineſs, now in trifles loſt:
Who leave it firſt, the peaceful port firſt gain;
Hold then! no farther launch into the main:
Contract your ſails; life nothing can beſtow
By long continuance, but continu'd woe:
The wretched privilege daily to deplore
The fun'rals of our friends, who go before:
Diſeaſes, pains, anxieties, and cares,
And age ſurrounded with a thouſand ſnares.

But whither hurry'd by a gen'rous ſcorn
Of this vain world, ah whither am I borne?
Let's not unbid th' Almighty's ſtandard quit,
Howe'er ſevere our poſt, we muſt ſubmit.

Cou'd I a firm perſuaſion once attain
That after death no Being wou'd remain;
To thoſe dark ſhades I'd willingly deſcend,
Where all muſt ſleep, this drama at an end:
Nor life accept altho' renew'd by Fate
Ev'n from its earlieſt, and its happieſt ſtate.

Might

Might I from Fortune's bounteous hand receive
Each boon, each bleſſing in her pow'r to give,
Genius, and ſcience, morals, and good-ſenſe,
Unenvy'd honors, wit, and eloquence,
A num'rous offſpring to the world well known
Both for paternal virtues, and their own:
Ev'n at this mighty price I'd not be bound
To tread the ſame dull circle round, and round;
The ſoul requires enjoyments more ſublime,
By ſpace unbounded, undeſtroy'd by time.

GOD then has all creation given,
Sufficient marks of an indulgent heaven,
Excepting in ourselves, ourselves of all
His works the chiefest in this terrestrial ball
His own bright image, who alone unblest
Feel ills perpetual, happy all the rest.
But hold, presumptuous! change not heav'n's decree
With such injustice, such partiality.

Yet true it is, survey we life around,
Whole hosts of ills on ev'ry side are found;
Who wound not here and there by chance a foe,
But at the species meditate the blow:
What millions perish by each others hands,
In War's fierce rage? or by the dread commands
Of tyrants languish out their lives in chains,
Or lose them in variety of pains?
What numbers pinch'd by want and hunger die,
In spite of Nature's liberality?
(Those, still more num'rous, I to name disdain,
By lewdness and intemperance justly slain;)
What numbers guiltless of their own disease
Are snatch'd by sudden death, or waste by slow degrees?

Where then is Virtue's well deserv'd reward?—
Let's pay to Virtue ev'ry due regard,

That ſhe enables man, let us confeſs,
To bear thoſe evils, which ſhe can't redreſs,
Gives hope, and conſcious peace, and can aſſuage
Th' impetuous tempeſts both of luſt and rage;
Yet ſhe's a guard ſo far from being ſure,
That oft her friends peculiar ills endure:
Where Vice prevails, Virtue is their fate;
Tyrants purſue them with a three-fold hate;
How many struggling in their country's cause,
And from their country meriting applauſe,
Have fall'n by wretches fond to be inſlav'd,
And perish'd by the hands themſelves had ſav'd!

Soon as ſuperior worth appears in view,
See knaves and fools united to purſue!
The man ſo form'd they all conſpire to blame,
And envy's poiſonous tooth attacks his fame;
Shou'd he at length, ſo truly good and great,
Prevail, and rule with honeſt views the ſtate,
Then muſt he toil for an ungrateful race,
Submit to clamor, libels, and diſgrace,
Threaten'd, oppos'd, defeated in his ends,
By foes ſeditious, and aſpiring friends.
Hear this, and tremble! all who wou'd be great,
Yet know not what attends that dang'rous wretched ſtate.

Is private life from all theſe evils free?
Vice of all kinds, rage, envy there we ſee,
Deceit, that Friendſhip's maſk inſidious wears,
Quarrels, and feuds, and laws entangling ſnares.

But there are pleaſures ſtill in human life,
Domeſtic eaſe, a tender loving wife,
Children whoſe dawning ſmiles your heart engage,
The grace and comfort of ſoft-ſtealing age;
If happineſs exiſts, 'tis ſurely here,
But are theſe joys exempt from care and fear?
Need I the miſeries of that ſtate declare,
When diff'rent paſſions draw the wedded pair?
Or ſay how hard theſe paſſions to diſcern,
From the dye's caſt, and 'tis too late to learn?
Who can inſure, that what is right, and good,
Theſe children ſhall purſue? or if they ſhou'd,
Death comes when leaſt you fear ſo black a day,
And all your blooming hopes are ſnatch'd away.

We ſay not, that theſe ills from Virtue flow;
Did her wiſe precepts rule the world, we know
The golden ages would again begin:
But 'tis our lot in this to ſuffer, and to ſin.

Obſerving this, ſome ſages have decreed,
That all things from two cauſes muſt proceed;
Two principles with equal pow'r endu'd,
This wholly evil, that ſupremely good.
From this ariſe the miſeries we endure,
Whilſt that adminiſters a friendly cure;
Hence life is chequer'd ſtill with bliſs, and woe,
Hence tares with golden grains promiſcuous grow,
And pois'nous ſerpents make their dread repoſe
Beneath the covert of the fragrant roſe.

Can

Can ſuch a ſyſtem ſatisfy the mind?
Are both theſe Gods an equal pow'r enjoin'd,
Or one ſuperior? Equal if you ſay,
Chaos returns, ſince neither will obey;
Is one ſuperior? good, or ill muſt reign,
Eternal joy, or everlaſting pain.
Whiche'er is conquer'd muſt entirely yield,
And the victorious God enjoy the field:
Hence with theſe fictions of the Magi's brain,
Hence ouzy *Nile*, with all her monſtrous train.

Or comes the Stoic nearer to the right?
He holds, that whatſoever yields delight,
Wealth, fame, externals all, are uſeleſs things,
Himſelf half ſtarving happier far than kings.
'Tis fine indeed to be ſo wond'rous wiſe!
By the ſame reaſoning too he pain denies;
Roaſt him, or hew him, break him on the wheel,
Retract he will not, tho' he can't but feel:
Pain's not an ill, he utters with a groan;
What then? an inconvenience 'tis, he'll own.
What vigour, health, and beauty? are theſe good?
No: they may be accepted, not purſued:
Abſurd to ſquabble thus about a name,
Quibbling with diff'rent words that mean the ſame.
Stoic, were you not fram'd of fleſh and blood,
You might be bleſt without external good,
But know, be ſelf-ſufficient as you can,
You are not ſpirit quite, but frail, and mortal man.

But ſince theſe ſages, ſo abſurdly wiſe,
Vainly pretend enjoyments to deſpiſe,
Becauſe externals, and in Fortune's pow'r,
Now mine, now thine, the bleſſings of an hour;
Why value then, that ſtrength of mind, they boaſt,
As often varying, and as quickly loſt?
A head-ach hurts it, or a rainy day,
And a ſlow fever wipes it quite away.

See [a] one whoſe councils, one [b] whole conquering hand
Once ſav'd Britannia's almoſt ſinking land!
Examples of the mind's extenſive pow'r,
Examples too how quickly fades that flow'r.
Him let me add, whom late we ſaw excel
[c] In each politer kind of writing well;
Whether he ſtrove our follies to expoſe
In eaſy verſe, or droll, and hum'rous proſe;
Few years alas! compel his throne to quit
This mighty monarch o'er the realms of wit,
See ſelf-ſurviving he's an ideot grown!
A melancholy proof our parts are not our own.

Thy tenets, Stoic, yet we may forgive,
If in a future ſtate we ceaſe to live.
For here the virtuous ſuffer much, 'tis plain;
If pain is evil, this muſt God arraign;
And on this principle confeſs we muſt,
Pain can no evil be, or God muſt be unjuſt.

[a] Lord Somers. [b] Duke of Marlborough. [c] Dean Swift.

Blind

Blind man! whose reason such strait bounds confine,
That ere it touches truth's extremest line,
It stops amaz'd, and quits the great design.
Own you not, Stoic, God is just and true?
Dare to proceed; secure this path pursue:
'Twill soon conduct you far beyond the tomb,
To future justice, and a life to come.
This path, you say, is hid in endless night,
'Tis self-conceit alone obstructs your sight:
You stop, ere half your destin'd course is run,
And triumph when the conquest is not won;
By this the Sophists were of old misled:
See what a monstrous race from one mistake is bred!

Hear then my argument:—confess we must,
A God there is, supremely wise and just!
If so, however things affect our sight,
As sings our bard, *whatever is, is right.*
But is it right, what here so oft appears,
That vice shou'd triumph, virtue sink in tears?
The inference then, that closes this debate,
Is, that there must exist a future state.
The wise extending their enquiries wide
See how both states are by connection ty'd,
Fools view but part, and not the whole survey,
So crowd existence all into a day.
Hence are they led to hope, but hope in vain,
That justice never will resume her reign;

ON IMMORTALITY

On this vain hope adulterers, thieves rely,
And to this altar vile ambition fly.
"But rules not God by general laws divine:
"Man's vice or virtue change not the design.
What laws are these? instinct, if you can trace
There's one design'd for brutes, and one for man.
Another guides inactive matter's course,
Attracting, and attracted by its force.
Hence mutual gravity subsists between
Far distant worlds, and ties the vast machine.

The herd of life, you by need I call to mind
Obey'd by birds, and beasts of every kind
By all the sandy plains savage brood
And all the numerous offspring of the flood;
Of these none uncontroul'd, and lawless rove,
But some determin'd and spontaneous move
Led by that instinct, heav'n itself inspires,
Or so much reason, as their state requires.
See all with skill acquire their daily food,
All use those arms, which Nature has bestow'd;
Produce their tender progeny, and feed
With care parental, whilst that care they need;
In these short offices compleatly blest,
No hopes beyond them, nor vain fears moleſt.

Man o'er a wider field extends his views,
God thro' the wonders of his works pursues,
Exploring there his attributes, and lays,
Adores, and imitates in Eternal Laus,

For ſure in nothing we approach ſo nigh
The great example of divinity,
As in benevolence: the patriot's ſoul
Knows ſelf-concern'd for it ſelf to roll,
But warms, enlightens, animates the whole;
Its mighty orb embraces firſt his friends,
His country next, then man, nor here it ends,
But to the meaneſt animal deſcends.

Wiſe Nature has this ſocial law confirm'd
By forming man ſo helpleſs, and unarm'd;
His want of others' aid, and pow'r of ſpeech
T'implore that aid this leſſon daily teach:
Mankind with other animals compare,
Single how weak, and impotent they are!
But view them in their complicated ſtate,
Their pow'rs how wond'rous, and their ſtrength how great,
When ſocial virtue individuals joins,
And in one ſolid maſs, like gravity combines!
This then's the firſt great law by Nature giv'n,
Stamp'd on our ſouls, and ratify'd by Heav'n,
All from utility this law approve,
As ev'ry private bliſs muſt ſpring from ſocial love.

Why deviate then ſo many from this law?
See paſſions, cuſtom, vice and folly draw!
Survey the rolling globe from Eaſt to Weſt!
How few, alas! how very few are bleſt!
Beneath the frozen pole, and burning line,
What poverty and indolence combine,

To

To cloud with Error's miſts the human mind?
No trace of man, but in the form we find.

And are we free from error and diſtreſs,
Whom Heav'n with clearer light has pleas'd to bleſs?
Whom true Religion leads? (for ſhe but leads
By ſoft perſuaſion, not by force proceeds;)
Behold how we avoid this radiant ſun,
This proffer'd guide how obſtinately ſhun,
And after Sophiſtry's vain ſyſtems run!
For theſe as for eſſentials we engage
In wars, and maſſacres with holy rage;
Brothers by brothers' impious hands are ſlain,
Miſtaken Zeal how ſavage is thy reign!

Unpuniſh'd vices here ſo much abound,
All right, and wrong, all order they confound;
Theſe are the giants, who the gods defy,
And mountains heap on mountains to the ſky;
Sees this th' Almighty Judge, or ſeeing ſpares,
And deems the crimes of Man beneath his cares?
He ſees; and will at laſt rewards beſtow,
And puniſhments, not leſs aſſur'd for being ſlow.

Nor doubt I, tho' this ſtate confus'd appears,
That ev'n in this God ſometimes interferes;
Sometimes, leſt man ſhou'd quite his pow'r diſown,
He makes that pow'r to trembling nations known:
But rarely this; not for each vulgar end,
As Superſtition's idle tales pretend,
Who thinks all foes to God who are her own,
Directs his thunder, and uſurps his throne!

Nor

Nor know what how much a conſcious mind
Avails to puniſh, or reward mankind;
Ev'n in this life thou, impious wretch, muſt feel
The Fury's ſcourges, and th' infernal wheel,
From man's tribunal, tho' thou hop'ſt to run,
Thyſelf thou can'ſt not, nor thy conſcience ſhun:
What muſt thou ſuffer when each dire diſeaſe,
The progeny of Vice, thy fabric ſeize?
Conſumption, fever, and the wreaking pain
Of ſpaſms, and gout, and ſtone, a frightful train!
When life new tortures can alone ſupply,
Life thy ſole hope thou'lt hate, yet dread to die.

Shou'd ſuch a wretch to num'rous years arrive,
It can be little worth his while to live:
No honours, no regards his age attend,
Companions fly; he ne'er could have a friend:
His flatterers leave him, and with wild affright
He looks within, and ſhudders at the ſight:
When threatning Death uplifts his pointed dart,
With what impatience he applies to art,
Life to prolong amidſt diſeaſe and pains!
Why this, if after it no ſenſe remains?
Why ſhou'd he chuſe theſe miſeries to endure,
If Death cou'd grant an everlaſting cure?
'Tis plain there's ſomething whiſpers in his ear,
(Tho' fain he'd hide it) he has much to fear.

See the reverſe how happy thoſe we find,
Who know by merit to engage mankind?

Prais'd by each tongue, by ev'ry heart belov'd,
For virtues practis'd, and for Arts improv'd:
Their early aspects shine with smiles serene,
And all is peace, and happiness within:
Their sleep is ne'er disturb'd by fears, or strife,
Nor lust, nor wine, impair the springs of life.

Him Fortune cannot sink, nor much elate,
Whose views extend beyond this mortal state;
By age when summon'd to resign his breath,
Calm, and serene, he sees approaching death,
As the safe port, the peaceful silent shore,
Where he may rest, life's tedious voyage o'er:
He, and he only, is of death afraid,
Whom his own conscience has a coward made;
Whilst he, who Virtue's radiant course has run,
Descends like a serenely setting sun,
His thoughts triumphant Heav'n alone employs,
And Hope anticipates his future joys.

So good, so blest th' illustrious *Hough* we find,
Whose image dwells with pleasure on my mind;
The mitre's glory, Freedom's constant friend,
In times which ask'd a champion to defend;
Who after near an hundred virtuous years,
His senses perfect, free from pains and fears,
Replete with life, with honours, and with age,
Like an applauded actor left the stage;
Or like some victor in th' Olympic games,
Who, having run his course, the crown of Glory claims.

* Bishop of Worcester.

From

From this juſt contraſt plainly it appears,
How conſcience can inſpire both hopes and fears.
But whence proceed theſe hopes or whence this dread,
If nothing really can affect the dead?
See all things join to promiſe and preſage
The ſure arrival of a future age!
Whate'er their lot is here, the good and wiſe
Nor doat on life, nor peeviſhly deſpiſe.
An honeſt man, when Fortune's ſtorms begin,
Has Conſolation always ſure within.
And, if ſhe ſends a more propitious gale,
He's pleas'd, but not forgetful in may fail.

Nor fear that he, who ſits ſo looſe to life,
Shou'd too much ſhun its labours, and its ſtrife.
And ſcorning wealth, contented to be mean,
Shrink from the duties of this buſtling ſcene,
Or, when his country's ſafety claims his aid,
Avoid the fight inglorious, and afraid:
Who ſcorns life moſt muſt ſurely be moſt brave,
And he, who pow'r contemns, be leaſt a ſlave:
Virtue will lead him to Ambition's ends,
And prompt him to defend his country and his friends.

But ſtill his merit you can not regard,
Who thus purſues a poſthumous reward;
His ſoul, you cry, is uncorrupt and great,
Who quite uninfluenc'd by a future ſtate,
Embraces Virtue from a nobler ſenſe
Of her abſtracted, native excellence,

From the full ocean, by high essence brings
The beauty, fitness, harmony of things.
It knows the end for which the means appear,
Who follows where instinctive Nature leads,
Aims, by the laws of his being, right;
And soars triumphant on the wings of truth.

Say, what this verdant virtuous man pursues,
No mean rewards, no mercenary views;
Not wealth, luxurious, or a name to leave,
Nor fame by fatal acquisition vain:
He follows but where Nature points the road,
Rising in Virtue's school, till he ascends to God.

But we, th' inglorious common herd of Man,
Sail without compass, toil without a plan,
In Fortune's varying storms for ever toss'd,
Shadows pursue, that in pursuit are lost,
Mere infants all, till life's extremest day,
Scrambling for toys, then tossing them away.
All fails and useless
Who rests of Immortality assur'd
Is safe, whatever ills are here endur'd:
He hopes not vainly, in a world like this,
To meet with pure uninterrupted bliss;
For good and ill, in this imperfect state,
Are ever mix'd by the decrees of fate.
With Wisdom's richest harvest Folly grows,
And baleful hemlock mingles with the rose:
All things are blended, changeable, and vain,
No hope, no wish we perfectly obtain;

God

God may perhaps (might human reason hope)
Pretend to frighten infancy with age,
Have thus ordain'd things, that the restless mind
No happiness completer than its may find,
And, by this friendly chastisement made wise,
To learn in safety best returns may rise.

Come then, since now in safety we have past
Thro' Error's rocks, and see the port at last,
Let us review and recollect the whole.—
Thus stands my argument.—That thinking soul
Cannot terrestrial, or material be,
He claims by Nature Immortality,
Rising in Virtue.
God, who created it, can make it end,
We question not, but cannot apprehend
He will, because it is by him endued
With strong ideas of all perfect Good:
With wond'rous pow'rs to know and calculate
Things too remote from this our earthly state,
With future prelages of a life to come,
All false and useless; if beyond the tomb
Our beings cease! we therefore can't believe
God either acts in vain, or can deceive.

If ev'ry rule of equity demands,
That Vice and Virtue from the Almighty's hands
Shou'd due rewards, and punishments receive,
And this by no means happens whilst we live;
It follows that a time must surely come,
When each shall meet their well adjusted doom.

Then

Then ſhall this ſcene, which now to human ſight
Seems ſo unworthy Wiſdom infinite,
A ſyſtem of conſummate ſkill appear,
And ev'ry cloud diſpers'd, be beautiful and clear.

Doubt we of this! what ſolid proof remains,
That o'er the world a wiſe diſpoſer reigns?
Whilſt all Creation ſpeaks a pow'r divine,
Is it deficient in the main deſign?
Not ſo: the day ſhall come, (pretend not now
Preſumptuous to enquire or when, or how)
But after death ſhall come th' important day,
When God to all his juſtice ſhall diſplay;
Each action with impartial eyes regard,
And in a juſt proportion puniſh and reward.

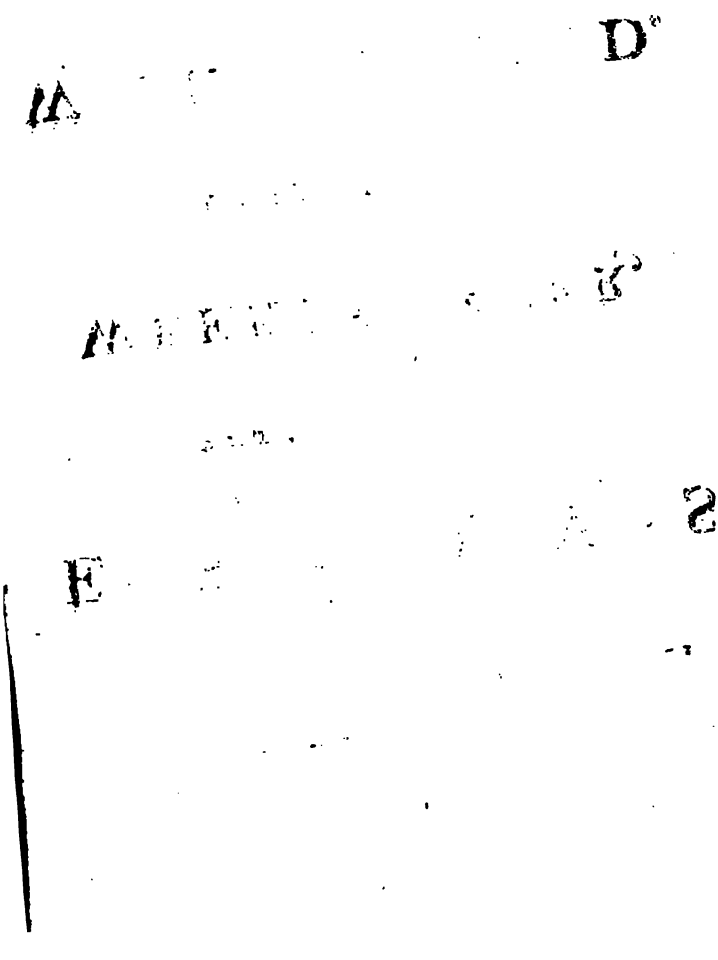
PIECES,

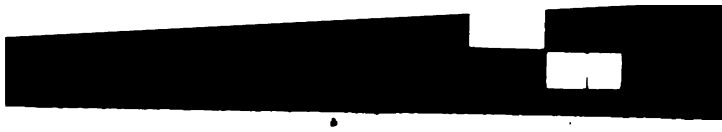
RELIGIOUS,

MORAL,

AND

METAPHYSICAL.


D



ESSAYS

PUBLISHED IN A

WEEKLY PAPER,

CALLED THE

WORLD.

N 2

THE

WORLD.

NUMBER CXXV.

HAD the many wiſe philoſophers of antiquity, who have ſo often and ſo juſtly compared the life of man to a race, lived in the preſent times, they would have ſeen the propriety of that ſimile greatly augmented: for if we obſerve the behaviour of the polite part of this nation (that is, of *all* the nation) we ſhall ſee that their whole lives are one continued race; in which every one is endeavouring to diſtance all behind him, and to overtake, or paſs by, all who are before him: every one is flying from his inferiors, in purſuit of his ſuperiors, who fly from Him with equal alacrity.

WERE not the conſequences of this ridiculous pride of the moſt deſtructive nature to the public, the ſcene would be really entertaining. Every tradeſman is a merchant, every merchant is a gentleman, and every gentleman one of the nobleſs. We are a

nation of gentry, *populus generoſorum*: we have no ſuch thing as common people amongſt us: between vanity and gin, the ſpecies is utterly deſtroyed. The ſons of our loweſt mechanics, acquiring with their learning at charity-ſchools, the laudable ambition of becoming gentle-folks, deſpiſe their paternal occupations, and are all ſoliciting for the honourable employments of tidewaiters and exciſemen. Their girls are all milliners, mantua-makers, or lady's women; or preſumptuouſly exerciſe that genteel profeſſion, which uſed to be peculiarly reſerved for the politely educated, but unportioned daughters of their ſuperiors. Attorneys clerks and city prentices dreſs like cornets of dragoons, keep their miſtreſſes and their hunters, criticiſe at the play, and toaſt at the tavern. The merchant leaves his compting-houſe for St. James's; and the country-gentleman his own affairs for thoſe of the public, by which neither of them receive much benefit. Every commoner of diſtinction is impatient for a peerage, and treads hard upon the heels of quality in dreſs, equipage and expences of every kind. The nobility, who can aim no higher, plunge themſelves into debt and dependance, to preſerve their rank; and are even there quickly overtaken by their unmerciful purſuers.

THE ſame fooliſh vanity, that thus prompts us to imitate our ſuperiors, induces us alſo to be,

or

or to pretend to be, their inſeparable companions; or, as the phraſe is, to keep the *beſt company*; by which is always to be underſtood, ſuch company as are much above us in rank or fortune, and conſequently deſpiſe and avoid us, in the ſame manner as we ourſelves do our inferiors. By this ridiculous affectation are all the pleaſures of ſocial life, and all the advantages of friendly converſe utterly deſtroyed. We chuſe not our companions for their wit and learning, their good humour or good ſenſe, but for their power of conferring this imaginary dignity; as if greatneſs was communicable, like the powers of the load-ſtone by friction, or by contact, like electricity. Every young gentleman is taught to believe it is more eligible, and more honourable, to deſtroy his time, his fortune, his morals, and his underſtanding at a gaming houſe with the *beſt company*, than to improve them all in the converſation of the moſt ingenious, and entertaining of his equals; and every ſelf-conceited girl in faſhionable life, chuſes rather to endure the affected ſilence and inſolent head-ach of my lady ducheſs for a whole evening, than to paſs it in mirth and jollity with the moſt amiable of her acquaintance. For ſince it is poſſible that ſome of my readers, who have not had the honour of being admitted into the *beſt company*, ſhould imagine that amongſt ſuch there is ever the beſt converſation, the moſt lively wit, the moſt profound judgment, the moſt engaging affability and politeneſs; it may be proper to inform them,

that this is by no means always the case; but that frequently in such company little is said and less attended to, no disposition appears either to please others, or to be pleased themselves; but that in the room of all the before-mentioned agreeable qualifications, cards are introduced, endued with the convenient power of reducing all men's understandings, as well as their fortunes, to an equality.

It is pleasant to observe how this race, converted into a kind of perpetual warfare between the *good* and *bad company* in this country, has subsisted for half a century last past; in which the former, have been perpetually pursued by the latter, and fairly beaten out of all their resources for superior distinction; out of innumerable fashions in dress, and variety of diversions, every one of which they have been obliged to abandon, as soon as occupied by their impertinent rivals. In vain have they armed themselves with lace and embroidery, and intrenched themselves in hoops and furbelows; in vain have they had recourse to full-bottomed perins wigs, and toupees; to high-heads, and low-heads, and no heads at all: trade has bestowed riches on their competitors, and riches have procured them equal finery. Hair has curled as genteely on one side of Temple-bar, as on the other, and hoops have grown to as prodigious a magnitude in the foggy air of Cheapside, as in the purer regions of Grosvenor-square and Hill-street.

With

Wherefore as the ladies have operas, oratorios, ridottos, and other expensive diversions been provided to exclude *bad company*; tradesmen, by enhancing their prices, have found tickets for their wives and daughters, and by this means have been enabled to insult the *good company*, their customers, at their own expence: and like true conquerors, have obliged the enemy to pay for their defeat. But this stratagem has in some measure been obviated by the prudence of the *very best company*, who, for this, and many other wise considerations, have usually declined paying them at all.

For many years was this combat between the *good* and *bad company* of this metropolis performed, like the ancient tilts and tournaments, before his Majesty and the royal family, every Friday night in the drawing-room at St. James's, which now appears, as it usually fares with the seat of war, desolate and uninhabited, and totally deserted on both sides: except that on a twelfth-night, the *bad company* never fail to assemble, to commemorate annually the victories they have there obtained.

The *good company* being thus every where put to flight, they thought proper at last to retire to their own citadels; that is, to form numerous and brilliant assemblies at their own hôtels, in which they imagined, that they could neither be imitated, nor intruded on. But here again they were grievously

ously miſtaken; for no ſooner was the ſignal given, but every little lodging-houſe in town, of two rooms and a cloſet on a floor, or rather of two cloſets and a cupboard, teemed with card tables, and overflowed with company: and as making a crowd was the great point here principally aimed at, the ſmaller the houſes, and the more indifferent the company, this point was the more eaſily effected. Nor could intruſion be better guarded againſt, than imitation; for by ſome means or other, either by the force of beauty or of dreſs, of wealth or impudence, of folly enough to loſe great ſums at play, or of knavery enough to win them, or of ſome ſuch eminent and extraordinary qualifications, their plebeian enemies ſoon broke through the ſtrongeſt of their barriers, and mingled in the thickeſt of their ranks, to the utter deſtruction of all ſuperiority and diſtinction.

But though it muſt be owned that the affairs of the *good company* are now in a very bad ſituation, yet I would not have them deſpair, nor perpetually carry about the marks of their defeat in their countenances, ſo viſible in a mixture of *fierté* and dejection. They have ſtill one aſylum left to fly to, which with all their advantages of birth and education, it is ſurpriſing they ſhould not long ſince have diſcovered; but ſince they have not, I ſhall beg leave to point it out; and it is this: that they once more retire to the long deſerted forts

ſorts of true Britiſh grandeur, their princely ſeats and magnificent caſtles in their ſeveral countries, and there, arming themſelves with religion and virtue, hoſpitality and charity, civility and friendſhip, bid defiance to their impertinent purſuers: and though I will not undertake that they ſhall not, even here, be followed in time, and imitated by their inferiors, yet ſo averſe are all ranks of people at preſent to this ſort of retirement, ſo totally diſuſed from the exerciſe of theſe kinds of arms, and ſo unwilling to return to it, that I will venture to promiſe, it will be very long before they can be overtaken or attacked; but that here, and here only, they may enjoy their favourite ſingularity, unmoleſted for half a century to come.

THE

THE WORLD.

NUMBER CLIII.

HAVING been frequently preſſed by Sir John Jolly, (an old friend of mine poſſeſſed of a fine ſeat, a large park, and a plentiful eſtate) to paſs a few weeks with him in the country, I determined laſt autumn to accept his invitation, propoſing to myſelf the higheſt pleaſure from changing the noiſe and hurry of this buſtling metropolis, for the agreeable ſilence, and ſoothing indolence of a rural retirement. I accordingly ſet out one morning, and pretty early the next arrived at the habitation of my friend, ſituated in a moſt delicious and romantic ſpot, which (the owner having fortunately no TASTE) is not yet defaced by IMPROVEMENTS. On my approach, I abated a little of my travelling pace, to look round me, and admire the tow'ring hills, and

fertile

fertile vales, the winding ſtreams, the ſtately woods, and ſpacious lawns, which, gilded by the [illegible] enchanting proſpect; and I pleaſed myſelf with the thoughts of the happy hours I ſhould ſpend amidſt theſe paſtoral ſcenes, in reading, in meditation, or in ſoft repoſe, inſpired by the lowing of diſtant herds, the falls of waters, and the melody of birds.

I was received with a hearty welcome, and many ſhakes by the hand by my old friend, whom I had not ſeen for many years, except once, when he was called to town by a proſecution in the King's bench, for miſunderſtanding the ſenſe of an act of parliament, which, on examination, was found to be nonſenſe. He is an honeſt gentleman of a middle age, a hale conſtitution, good natural parts, and abundant ſpirits; a keen ſportſman, an active magiſtrate, and a tolerable farmer, not without ſome ambition of acquiring a ſeat in parliament, by his intereſt in a neighbouring borough: ſo that between his purſuits of game, of juſtice, and popularity, beſides the management of a large quantity of land, which he keeps in his own hands, as he terms it, for amuſement, every moment of his time is ſufficiently employed. His wife is an agreeable woman, of about the ſame age, and has been handſome; but though years have ſomewhat impaired her charms, they have

have not in the leaſt her reliſh for company, cards, balls, and all manner of public diverſions.

On my arrival, I was firſt conducted into the breakfaſt room, which, with ſome ſurpriſe, I ſaw quite filled with genteel perſons of both ſexes, in diſhabille, with their hair in papers; the cauſe of which I was quickly informed of, by the many apologies of my lady for the meanneſs of the apartment ſhe was obliged to allot me, "By reaſon the houſe was ſo crouded with company "during the time of their races, which, ſhe ſaid, "began that very day for the whole week, and "for which they were immediately preparing." I was inſtantly attacked by all preſent with one voice, or rather with many voices at the ſame time, to accompany them thither; to which I made no oppoſition, thinking it would be attended with more trouble than the expedition itſelf.

As ſoon as the ladies and the equipages were ready, we iſſued forth in a moſt magnificent cavalcade; and after travelling five or ſix miles through bad roads, we arrived at the Red Lion, juſt as the ordinary was making it's appearance on the table. The ceremonials of this ſumptuous entertainment, which conſiſted of cold fiſh, lean chickens, ruſty hams, raw veniſon, ſtale game, green fruit, and grapeleſs wines, deſtroyed at leaſt two hours; with five times that number of heads;

ruffles,

ruffles, and ſuits of cloaths, by the unfortunate effuſion of butter and gravy. From hence we proceeded a few miles farther to the race-ground, where nothing, I think, extraordinary happened, but that amongſt much diſorder and drunkenneſs, few limbs, and no necks were broken: and from theſe Olympic games, which, to the great emolument of pick-pockets, laſted till it was dark, we galloped back to the town through a ſoaking ſhower, to dreſs for the aſſembly. But this I found no eaſy taſk; nor could I poſſibly accompliſh it, before my cloaths were quite dried upon my back; my ſervant ſtaying behind to ſettle his bettys, and having ſtowed my portmanteau into the boot of ſome coach, which he could not find, to ſave himſelf both the trouble and indignity of carrying it.

BEING at laſt equipped, I entered the ball-room, where the ſmell of a ſtable over which it was built, the ſavour of the neighbouring kitchen, the fumes of tallow candles, rum-punch and tobacco diſperſed over the whole houſe, and the balſamic effluvia's from many ſweet creatures who were dancing, with almoſt equal ſtrength contended for ſuperiority. The company was numerous and well-dreſt, and differed not in any reſpect from that of the moſt brilliant aſſembly in London, but in ſeeming better pleaſed, and more deſirous of pleaſing; that is, happier in themſelves, and civiller

viller to each other. I obſerved the door was blocked up the whole night by a few faſhionable young men, whoſe faces I remember to have ſeen about town, who would neither dance, drink tea, play at cards, nor ſpeak to any one, except now and then in whiſpers to a young lady, who ſat in ſilence at the upper end of the room, in a hat and negligee, with her back againſt the wall, her arms a-kimbo, her legs thruſt out, a ſneer on her lips, a ſcowl on her forehead, and an invincible aſſurance in her eyes. This lady I had alſo frequently met with, but could not then recollect where; but have ſince learnt, that ſhe had been toad-eater to a woman of quality, and turned off for too cloſe and preſumptuous an imitation of her betters. Their behaviour affronted moſt of the company, yet obtained the deſired effect: for I overheard ſeveral of the country ladies ſay "it "was a pity they were ſo proud; for to be ſure "they were prodigious well-bred people and had "an immenſe deal of wit." A miſtake they could never have fallen into, had theſe patterns of politeneſs condeſcended to have entered into any converſation. Dancing and cards, with the refreſhment of cold chickens and negus about twelve, carried us on till day-break, when our coaches being ready, with much ſolicitation, and more ſqueezing, I obtained a place in one, in which no more than ſix had before artificially ſeated themſelves; and about five in the morning,

many and great perils, we arrived ſafely

as now the middle of harveſt, which had ttle ſuffered by our diverſions; and there- coach-horſes were immediately degraded ns, and having reſted during our fatigues, ſt diſtribution of things, were now obliged ur, while we were at reſt. I mean not in mber to include myſelf; for, though I immediately to bed, no reſt could I obtain e time, for the rumbling of carts, and the ſation of their drivers juſt under my window. e at length got the better of all obſtacles, fell aſleep; but had ſcarce cloſed my eyes, I was awaked by a much louder noiſe, was that of a whole pack of hounds, with ociferous attendants, ſetting out to meet nd, and ſome choice ſpirits, whom we had ft behind at the aſſembly, and who choſe mner of refreſhment after a night's debauch, than the more uſual and inglorious one of to bed. Theſe ſounds dying away by their e, I again compoſed myſelf to reſt; but reſently again rouſed by more diſcordant s, uttering all the groſſneſs of Drury-lane, urrility of Billinſgate. I now waked indeed omewhat more ſatisfaction, at firſt thinking, unpaſtoral dialogue, that I was once more ed ſafe to London; but I ſoon perceived

my miſtake, and underſtood that theſe were ſome innocent and honeſt neighbours of Sir John's, who were coming to determine their gentle diſputes before his tribunal, and being ordered to wait till his return from hunting, were reſolved to make all poſſible uſe of this ſuſpenſion of juſtice. It being now towards noon, I gave up all thoughts of ſleep; and it was well I did; for I was preſently alarmed by a confuſion of voices, as loud though ſomewhat ſweeter than the former. As they proceeded from the parlour under me, amidſt much giggling, laughing, ſqueaking, and ſcreaming, I could diſtinguiſh only the few following incoherent words—*horrible—frightful—ridiculous—Frieſland hen—rouge—red-lion at Brentford—ſtay-padded—ram's-horn—ſaucy minx—impertinent coxcomb.* I ſtarted up, dreſſed me, and went down where I found the ſame polite company, who breakfaſted there the day before, in the ſame attitude, diſcourſing of their friends, with whom they had ſo agreeably ſpent the laſt night, and to whom they were again haſtening with the utmoſt impatience. I was ſaluted with a how d'ye from them all at the ſame inſtant, and again preſſed into the ſervice of the day.

In this manner I went through the perſecution of the whole week, with the ſufferings and reſolution, but not with the reward of a martyr, as found no peace at the laſt: for at the concluſion of it, Sir John obligingly requeſted me to make

m

my ſtay with him as long as I poſſibly could, aſſuring me, that though the races were now over, I ſhould not want diverſions; for that next week he expected Lord Rattle, Sir Harry Bumper, and a large fox-hunting party; and that the week after, being the full moon, they ſhould pay and receive all their neighbouring viſits, and ſpend their evenings very ſociably together; by which is ſignified, in the country dialect, eating, drinking, and playing at cards all night. My lady added with a ſmile, and much delight in her eyes, that ſhe believed they ſhould not be alone one hour in the whole week, and that ſhe hoped I ſhould not think the country ſo dull and melancholy a place as I expected. Upon this information I reſolved to leave it immediately, and told them, I was extremely ſorry that I was hindered by particular buſineſs from any longer enjoying ſo much polite and agreeable company; but that I had received a letter, which made it neceſſary for me to be in town. My friend ſaid he was no leſs concerned; but that I muſt not poſitively go, till after to-morrow; for that he then expected the mayor and aldermen of his corporation, ſome of whom were facetious companions, and ſung well. This determined me to ſet out that very evening; which I did with much ſatisfaction; and made all poſſible haſte, in ſearch of ſilence and ſolitude, to my lodgings, next door to a braſier's at Charing-croſs.

THE WORLD.

NUMBER CLVII.

ONE can ſcarce paſs an hour in any company, without hearing it frequently aſſerted, that the preſent generation of ſervants in this country are the proudeſt, and the lazieſt, the moſt profligate, inſolent, and extravagant ſet of mortals any where to be found on the face of the globe: in which indiſputable truth I always readily give my aſſent, with but one ſingle exception, which is that of their maſters and ladies. Now, though by this exception I have incurred the contemptuous ſmiles of many a wiſe face, and the indignant frowns of many a pretty one, yet I ſhall here venture to ſhew, that the pride and lazineſs of our ſervants, from whence their profligacy, inſolence and extravagance muſt unavoidably proceed, are entirely owing, not only to our example, but to our cultivation, and are but the natural

natural productions of the ſame imperfections in ourſelves.

In the firſt place then, pride has put it into our heads, that it is moſt honourable to be waited on by gentlemen and ladies; and all, who are really ſuch by birth or education, having alſo too much of the ſame pride, however neceſſitous, to ſubmit to any ſervitude however eaſy, we are obliged to take the loweſt of the people, and convert them by our own ingenuity into the genteel perſonages, we think proper ſhould attend us. Hence our very footmen are adorned with gold and ſilver, with bags, coupees, and ruffles: the valet de chambre cannot be diſtinguiſhed from his maſter, but by being better dreſt; and Joan, who uſed to be but *as good as my lady in the dark*, is now by no means her inferior in the day-light. In great families I have frequently intreated the *maitre d'Hotel* to go before me, and have pulled a chair for the butler, imagining them to be part, and not the leaſt genteel part of the company. Their diverſions too are no leſs polite than their appearance; in the country they are ſportſmen, in town they frequent plays, opera's, and taverns, and at home have their routs and their gaming-tables.

But leſt thus exalting our ſervants to an equality with ourſelves ſhould not ſufficiently augment their pride, and deſtroy all ſubordination, we take

another method ſtill more effectually to compleat the work, which is, debaſing ourſelves to their meaneſs by a ridiculous imitation of their dreſſes and occupations. Hence were derived the flapped hat, and cropped hair, the green frock, the long ſtaff, and buckſkin breeches: hence, amongſt the ladies, the round-eared cap, the ſtuff night-gown, white apron, and black-leather ſhoe: and hence many perſons of the higheſt rank daily employ themſelves in riding matches, driving coaches, or in running before them, in order to convince their domeſtics how greatly they are inferior to them in the execution of theſe honourable offices. Since then we make uſe of ſo much art to corrupt our ſervants, have we reaſon to be angry with their concurrence? Since we take ſo much pains to inform them of their ſuperiority, and our weakneſs, can we be ſurpriſed that they deſpiſe us, or diſpleaſed with their inſolence and impertinence?

As the pride of ſervants thus proceeds from the pride, ſo does their lazineſs from the lazineſs, of their maſters: and indeed, if there is any characteriſtic peculiar to the young people of faſhion of the preſent age, it is their lazineſs, or an extreme unwillingneſs to attend to any thing that can give them the leaſt trouble, or diſquietude; without any degree of which they would fain enjoy all the luxuries of life, in contradiction to the diſpoſitions of providence, and the nature of things. They would

would have great estates without any management, great expences without any accounts, and great families without any discipline or œconomy; in short, they are fit only to be inhabitants of *Lubberland*, where, as the child's geography informs us, men lie upon their backs with their mouths open, and it rains fat pigs, ready roasted. From this principle, when the pride they have infused into their servants has produced a proportionable degree of laziness, their own laziness is too prevalent to suffer them to struggle with that of their servants; and they rather chuse that all business should be neglected, than to enforce the performance of it; and to give up all authority, rather than take the pains to support it: from whence it happens, that in great and noble families, where the domestics are very numerous, they will not so much as wait upon themselves; and was it not for the friendly assistance of chair-women, porters, chair-men, and shoe-blacks, procured by a generous distribution of coals, candles and provisions, the common offices of life could never be executed. In such it is often as difficult to procure conveniences, as in a desart island; and one frequently wants necessaries in the midst of profuseness and extravagance. In such families I have sometimes been shut up in a cold room, and interdicted from the use of fire and water for half a day; and, though during my imprisonment I have seen numberless servants continually passing by, the utmost I could

procure of them was, a promise that they would send somebody to relieve my necessities, which they never performed. In such I have seen, when a favourite dog has discharged a too plentiful dinner in the drawing-room, at the frequent ringing of the bell numerous attendants make their appearance, all intreated to depute some one to remove the nuisance with the utmost expedition, but no one has been found in such a house mean enough to undertake such an employment, and so it has lain smoking under the noses of the illustrious company during the whole evening.

I could produce innumerable instances, minute indeed and unobserved, but well worthy observation, of the encroachments of our servants on our easiness and indolence, in the introduction of most of the fashions that have prevailed for several years past in our equipages, and domestic oeconomy, all which are entirely calculated for their pleasure, ease, or advantage, in direct contradiction to our own. To mention but a few: our coaches are made uneasy, but light, that they may whirl us along with the utmost rapidity, for their own amusement. Glasses before are laid aside, and we are immured in the dark, that the coachman may no longer be under our inspection, but be drunk or asleep without any observation. Family liveries are discarded, honest badges of servility, which might give information to whom their wearers belonged, and by

whom complaints might be addreſſed of their enormities. By their careleſſneſs and idleneſs they have obliged us to hire all our horſes, and ſo have got rid of the labour of looking after them. By their impoſitions on the road they have forced us into poſt-chaiſes, by which means they are at liberty to travel by themſelves, as it beſt ſuits their own eaſe and convenience. By their impertinence, which we have not patience to endure, nor reſolution to repreſs, they have reduced us to dumb-waiters, that is, to wait upon ourſelves; by which means they have ſhaken off the trouble and condeſcenſion of attending us. By their profuſion and miſmanagement in houſe-keeping, they have compelled us to allow them board-wages; by which means they have obtained a conſtant excuſe to loiter at public-houſes, and money in their pockets to ſquander there in gaming, drunkenneſs, and extravagance. The laſt of theſe is an evil of ſo gigantic a ſize, ſo conducive to the univerſal corruption of the lower part of this nation, and ſo entirely deſtructive of all family order, decency, and œconomy, that it well deſerves the conſideration of a legiſlature, who are not themſelves under the influence of their ſervants, and can pay them their wages without any inconvenience.

From what has been ſaid, it plainly appears, that every man in this country is ill-ſerved in proportion to the number and dignity of his ſervants; the

the parſon, or the tradeſman, who keeps but two maids and a boy, not exceeding twelve years old, generally very well waited on; the private gentleman infinitely worſe; but perſons of great fortunes or quality, afraid of the idols of their own ſetting up, are neglected, abuſed and impoveriſhed by their dependents; and the King himſelf, as is due to his exalted ſtation, is more impoſed on, and worſe attended, than any one of his ſubjects.

THE WORLD.

NUMBER CLXIII.

THERE was an ancient ſect of philoſophers, the diſciples of Pythagoras, who held, that the ſouls of men, and all other animals exiſted in a ſtate of perpetual tranſmigration; and that when by death they were diſlodged from one corporeal habitation, they were immediately reinſtated in another, happier or more miſerable, according to their behaviour in the former: ſo that when any perſon made his exit from the ſtage of this world, he was ſuppoſed only to retire behind the ſcenes to be new-dreſſed, and to have had a new part aſſigned him, more or leſs agreeable, in proportion to the merit of his performance in the laſt.

This doctrine of tranſmigration, I muſt own, was always a very favourite tenet of mine, and always appeared to me one of the moſt rational gueſſes

gueſſes of the human mind into a future ſtate. I ſhall here therefore endeavour to ſhew the great probability of its truth, from the following conſiderations. Firſt from its juſtice, ſecondly from its utility, and laſtly from the difficulty we lie under to account for the ſufferings of many innocent creatures without it.

FIRST then, the juſtice of this ſyſtem exceeds that of all others; becauſe by it the great law of retaliation may be more ſtrictly adhered to: for by means of this metamorphoſis, men may ſuffer in one life the very ſame injuries which they have inflicted in another; and that too in the very ſame perſons, by a change only of ſituation. Thus, for inſtance, the cruel tyrant who in one life has ſported with the miſeries of his ſlaves, may in the next feel all the miſeries of ſlavery under a maſter as unmerciful as himſelf. The relentleſs and unjuſt judge may be impriſoned, condemned and hanged in his turn. Divines may be compelled by fire and faggot to believe the creeds and articles they have compoſed for the edification of others; and ſoldiers may be plundered and raviſhed in the perſons of defenceleſs peaſants, and innocent virgins. The lawyer reviving in the character of a client, may be tormented with delay, expence, uncertainty and diſappointment; and the phyſician, who in one life has taken exorbitant fees, may be obliged to take phyſic in another. All thoſe who under

the

the honourable denomination of ſportſmen, have entertained themſelves with the miſeries and deſtruction of innocent animals, may be terrified and murthered in the ſhapes of hares, partridges and woodcocks; and all thoſe, who under the more illuſtrious title of heroes, have delighted in the devaſtation of their own ſpecies, may be maſſacred by each other in the forms of invincible game-cocks, and pertinacious bull dogs. As for ſtateſmen, miniſters, and all great men devoted to great buſineſs, they, however guilty, cannot be more properly, nor more ſeverely puniſhed, than by being obliged to reaſſume their former characters, and ſo live the very ſame lives over again.

In the next place, the utility of this ſyſtem is equal to its juſtice, and happily coincides with it: for by means of this tranſmigration, all the neceſſary inconveniencies, and all the burthenſome offices of life being impoſed on thoſe only, who by their miſbehaviour in a former ſtate have deſerved them, become at once juſt puniſhments to Them, and at the ſame time benefits to ſociety; and ſo all thoſe who have injured the public in one life by their vices, are obliged in another to make reparation by their ſufferings. Thus the tyrant, who by his power has oppreſſed his country in the ſituation of a prince, in that of a ſlave may be compelled to do it ſome ſervice by his labour. The highwayman who has ſtopped and plundered travellers,

may

may expedite and aſſiſt them in the ſhape of a poſt-horſe. The metaphorical buck, who has terrified ſober citizens by his exploits, converted into a real one, may make them ſome compenſation by his haunches; and mighty conquerors, who have laid waſte the world by their ſwords, may be obliged, by a ſmall alteration in ſex and ſituation, to contribute to its repeopling, by the qualms of breeding, and the pains of child-birth.

For my own part, I verily believe this to be the caſe. I make no doubt but that Louis the fourteenth is now chained to an oar in the gallies of France, and that Hernando Cortez is digging gold in the mines of Peru or Mexico. That Turpin the highwayman is ſeveral times a day ſpurred backwards and forwards between London and Epping; and that Lord *** and Sir Harry **** are now actually roaſting for a city feaſt. I queſtion not but that Alexander the Great, and Julius Cæſar have died many times in child-bed ſince their appearance in thoſe illuſtrious and depopulating characters; that Charles the twelfth is at this inſtant a curate's wife in ſome remote village, with a numerous and increaſing family; and that Kouli Khan is now whipped from pariſh to pariſh, in the perſon of a big bellied beggar-woman, with two children in her arms, and three at her back.

Lastly, the probability of this ſyſtem appears from the difficulty of accounting for the ſufferings

of many innocent creatures without it: for if we look round us, we cannot but obſerve a great and wretched variety of this kind; numberleſs animals ſubjected, by their own natures, to many miſeries, and by our cruelties to many more; incapable of crimes, and conſequently incapable of deſerving them; called into being, as far as we can diſcover, only to be miſerable for the ſervice or diverſion of others leſs meritorious than themſelves; without any poſſibility of preventing, deſerving, or receiving recompence for their unhappy lot, if their whole exiſtence is comprehended in the narrow and wretched circle of their preſent life. But the theory here inculcated, removes all theſe difficulties, and reconciles all theſe ſeemingly unjuſt diſpenſations with the ſtricteſt juſtice: it informs us, that theſe their ſufferings may be by no means undeſerved, but the juſt puniſhments of their former miſbehaviour in a ſtate, where, by means of their very vices, they may have eſcaped them. It teaches us that the purſued and perſecuted fox was once probably ſome crafty and rapacious miniſter, who had purchaſed by his ill-acquired wealth that ſafety, which he cannot now procure by his flight: that the bull, baited with all the cruelties that human ingenuity, inhuman malevolence can invent, was once ſome relentleſs tyrant, who had inflicted all the tortures which he now endures: that the poor bird, blinded, impriſoned, and at laſt ſtarved to death, in a cage, may have been ſome unforgiving creditor; and

ſo

and the widowed turtle, pining away life for the loss of her mate, some fashionable wife, rejoicing at the death of her husband, which her own ill-usage had occasioned.

NEVER can the delicious repast of roasted lobsters excite my appetite, whilst the ideas of the tortures in which those innocent creatures have expired, present themselves to my imagination. But when I consider that they must have once probably been Spaniards at Mexico, or Dutchmen at Amboyna, I fall to, both with a good stomach and a good conscience, and please myself with the thoughts, that I am thus offering up a sacrifice acceptable to the Manes of many millions of murdered Indians. Never can I repose myself with satisfaction in a post-chaise, whilst I look upon the starved, foundered, ulcerated, and excoriated animals, who draw it, as mere horses, condemned to such exquisite and unmerited torments for my convenience; but when I reflect, that they once must undoubtedly have existed in the characters of turnkeys of Newgate, or fathers of the holy inquisition, I gallop on with as much ease, as expedition; and am perfectly satisfied, that in pursuing my journey, I am but the executioner of the strictest justice.

I VERY well know that these sentiments will be treated as ludicrous by many of my readers, and looked upon only as the productions of an exube-

rant

mere imagination; but I know likewiſe, that this is owing to ill-grounded pride, and falſe notions of the dignity of human nature; for they are in themſelves juſt and ſerious, and carry with them the ſtrongeſt probability of their truth: ſo ſtrong is it, that I cannot but hope it will have ſome good effect on the conduct of thoſe polite people, who are too ſagacious, learned and couragious to be kept in awe by the threats of hell and damnation: and I exhort every fine lady to conſider how wretched will be her condition, if after twenty or thirty years ſpent at cards, in elegant rooms, kept warm by good fires and ſoft carpets, ſhe ſhould at laſt be obliged to change places with one of her coach-horſes; and every fine gentleman to reflect how much more wretched would be his, if after waſting his eſtate, his health and his life in extravagance, indolence and luxury, he ſhould again revive in the ſituation of one of his creditors.

THE WORLD.

NUMBER CLXXVIII.

NOT long ſince, I met at St. James's coffee-houſe, an old acquaintance of mine, Sir Harry Prigg; who having been long ruſticated, and much altered, I ſhould never have recollected, had it not been for the information of a fine old coat, in which I remembered him to have made a figure about town many years ago. After the uſual civilities had paſſed between us, amongſt many other queſtions, he aſked me when I had ſeen our old ſchool-follow, Sir John Jolly *. I anſwered, that I had laſt ſummer ſpent ſome days with him at his country-ſeat, in a manner which would have been highly agreeable to a perſon of a more faſhionable turn, but was to me rather fatiguing from its exceſs of gaiety and hoſpitality, which, according to

* See Number 153.

my

my unpolite taſte, were by no means conſiſtent with the ſoft and ſerious pleaſures of a rural retirement. He ſaid, he perfectly agreed with me in my ſentiments, and paſſed his time in the country in conformity to them: his manner of life, he was ſure, would exactly ſuit me, and obligingly begged I would make the experiment; adding, that he ſhould go down in a few days, and would carry me with him in his chariot. I accepted his invitation, not ſo much out of inclination, as curioſity to ſee a new ſcene of country life, formed on principles ſo oppoſite to what I had before experienced, and promiſed to attend him at the time appointed.

But firſt it will be proper to give ſome account of the birth, parentage, and education of my friend. He came young to his title, and a ſmall eſtate, and was ſoon after ſent to the univerſity; where his title abſurdly giving him the rank of nobility, and his eſtate, though ſmall, an allowance ſufficient to ſupport that rank at that place, he there contracted an affectation of grandeur, and a pert kind of ſelf-importance, which he has ever ſince retained, and which neither poverty nor ſolitude has yet been able to conquer. Having in two or three years acquired the uſual advantages of that ſort of education, ſuch as the arts of ſporting, toaſting, billiards and coachmanſhip, he came to London, entered into the gay world, and had

addreſs and qualifications ſufficient to introduce himſelf into what he ſtill calls the beſt company; that is, the company of ſmarts, bucks, jockeys and gameſters. Nor was he deficient in point of gallantry; for he ſoon commenced an intrigue with the ſiſter of one of theſe his friends. Whether his intentions were at firſt honourable, is not perfectly clear; but he was quickly obliged to declare them ſo, being acquainted, that a lady of her rank was not to be trifled with, and that he muſt either fight or marry; the latter of which he courageouſly choſe, as being the moſt daring action of the two. This lady had more gentility than beauty, more beauty than underſtanding, more underſtanding than fortune, and a fortune about equal to her reputation. She was tall and well-ſhaped, carried her head very high, and being the younger daughter of the younger ſon of the firſt couſin of an Iriſh baron, looked upon herſelf as a woman of quality. In a little time Sir Harry heartily hated her for compelling him to marry: and ſhe no leſs deſpiſed him for being compelled: ſo that finding little happineſs at home, they were obliged to ſeek it abroad at plays and routs, operas and gaming tables, at no ſmall expence. This could not continue long; ſo that before one winter was at an end, they diſcovered that the town-air would not agree with them, and ſo retired to their country ſeat, about forty miles from London; whither I ſhall now conduct my reader.

On the morning appointed, I attended early at their lodgings in town, where I found the poſt-chariot at the door, and my friend ſtanding by it, with a long whip in his hand, ready to mount the box; ſaying at the ſame time, that coachmen were ſuch inſolent and expenſive raſcals, there was no keeping them, and that therefore he always choſe to be his own. In the parlour ſat my lady, and colonel Macſhean, a gentleman who had long been very intimate with Sir Harry, and not leſs ſo with her ladyſhip; and in the paſſage ſtood her French woman, in a ſack and long ruffles, with her arms full of band-boxes and bundles; which were no ſooner diſpoſed of in various parts of the chariot, than my lady and myſelf, with her woman on a low ſtool at our feet, were ſtuffed into the little room that was left. Sir Harry mounted the box, his valet de chambre rode by, and a ſniveling footboy climbed up behind. Thus the whole family, with their baggage, and myſelf into the bargain, were conveyed without the expence of either a ſtage-coach or a waggon.

Nothing paſſed during our journey worth relating. Her ladyſhip ſpoke little, and that little was only complaints of her bad nerves, and ill ſtate of health; to which, having no expectation of a fee, I paid little attention. They both declared, that nobody but a carrier would dine at

an inn, wherefore they never ſtopped on the road: ſo with the aſſiſtance of a freſh pair of horſes, that had come twenty miles that morning without a bait, about ſun-ſet we arrived at our journey's end. The colonel got there before us, having rode poſt: for Sir Harry frequently declared to us both, that, tho' his friends were welcome, he never entertained their horſes; that it was not the faſhion of that country; neither my Lord **, nor the Duke of ***, nor himſelf did it.

It was not long before the dinner made its appearance; which was ſo very genteel, that had it not been rendered uneatable by a bad affectation of French cookery, it would not have been half ſufficient, after ſo many miles travelling, and ſo long faſting. At the concluſion we had meed, which paſſed for tokay, and elder wine, which Sir Harry ſwore was the beſt Burgundy in England, and that he himſelf had imported it, in conjunction with a noble lord in the neighbourhood. Over a glaſs of this, the cloth being removed, he informed us, "that when the ſmoke of London, and the "bad hours incident to keeping good company, "would no longer agree with his own or his wife's "conſtitution, he had determined to ſeek health "and quiet in an elegant retirement. He had "been offer'd indeed a ſeat in parliament, and "a conſiderable employment; but his crazy con-"ſtitution would not permit him to accept of the "one,

" one, nor his ſound principles of the other. " Retirement was their object; therefore all they " dreaded was the horrible irruptions of a coun- " try neighbourhood; but this they had happily " prevented. That indeed on their firſt coming, " every family within ten miles round, tormented " them with their impertinent viſits; but they " returned none, affronted them all, and ſo got " rid of them. Don't you think we did right, " my dear?" turning to his wife. " I think," anſwered ſhe in a ſurly and dejected voice, " that " it is better to forget the uſe of one's tongue, " than to converſe with ſquires wives, and parſons " daughters." " You are right, madam," added the colonel, with an oath and a loud laugh; " for what can one learn in ſuch a damned com- " pany?" " To-morrow," ſays my friend, ad- dreſſing himſelf to me, " you ſhall ſee that we " want no company, and that we can ſufficiently " amuſe ourſelves with building and planting, " with improvements and alterations, which I " dare ſay will be honoured with your approba- " tion."

ACCORDINGLY the next morning, as ſoon as breakfaſt was finiſhed, my lady and the colonel retired into her dreſſing-room to cribbage, and Sir Harry and myſelf to reconnoitre the place. The houſe ſtands at the end of a dirty village, and cloſe by it are a few tame deer, impounded in an orch-

ard, to which he gives the pompous title of a park. Behind is a fen, which he calls a piece of water, and before it a gooſe-common, on which he beſtows the name of a lawn. It was built in that deplorable æra of Engliſh architecture which introduced high doors, long windows, ſmall rooms, and corner chimneys; and of gardening, which projected gravel walks, clipt yews, and ſtrait-lined avenues, with a profuſion of brick walls, iron paliſado's and leaden images. But all theſe defects, and many others, he has now corrected by a judicious application of modern taſte. His doors are ſo reduced, you cannot enter with your hat on; and his windows ſo contracted, that you have ſcarce light enough to find it, if you pull it off. In the midſt of the front, one large bow-window is ſtuck on, reſembling a piece of whited brown paper plaiſtered on a broken noſe; and a great room is added behind to dine in, which, was it ever inhabited, would make all the little ones appear ſtill leſs: but having never yet been finiſhed, for want both of caſh and credit, it remains at preſent only a repoſitory for broken china, a pair of backgammon tables, and the children's play-things. His brick-walls are converted into chimneys and ovens, and his yew-trees ſupply them with faggots: his iron-work is ſold to the blackſmiths, and his heathen gods to the plumber, for the pious uſe of covering the pariſh-church: his gravel walks are ſown with graſs; and he frequently repeats that

frugal,

frugal, yet genteel maxim, that ſheep are the beſt gardeners. His horſe-pond being made ſerpentine, is become uſeleſs, leſt it ſhould be trod up; and his fences, being all Chineſe, are no fences at all; the horſes leaping over, and the hogs walking under them at their pleaſure. The tranſplanted avenue is expiring in leafleſs platoons; the kitchen-garden, for conveniency, is removed two furlongs from the houſe; and the kitchen itſelf unjuſtly turned out of doors, for ſmelling of victuals; a crime of which it has ever been acquitted by the voice of the whole country.

When our ſurvey was finiſhed, our amuſements were all at an end; for within doors the pleaſures both of ſociety and ſolitude were equally wanting. Of our converſation I have given a ſpecimen; and books there were none, except a ſmall one containing tunes for the French horn, belonging to Sir Harry, and the third volume of Peregrine Pickle, and a methodiſt prayer-book, the property of her ladyſhip. I began now to wiſh for a little of my friend Sir John's hoſpitality, of which there was not here the leaſt appearance. We heard not of a human creature, except by their injuries and inſults, not altogether indeed unprovoked; for the pantry and the cellar, though uſually empty, were always locked. Strong-beer there was none; and the ſmall, though nobody at home could drink it, was not ſuffered to be given away. The ſervants were

were always out of humour, and frequently changing; and the tradeſmen who brought their bills, were paid only by a wrangle, or a draught on ſome tenant who owed no rent. There was not a neighbour very near, except the parſon of the pariſh, and alderman Grub, a rich citizen, who had purchaſed a conſiderable part of it from Sir Harry. With theſe they lived in a ſtate of perpetual hoſtilities: they quarrelled with the alderman for preſuming to buy an eſtate which they wanted to ſell; and the parſon quarrelled with them, becauſe he was in poſſeſſion of the only living in the gift of Sir Harry, and the alderman had a much better to diſpoſe of. By the encouragement of theſe good neighbours, and their own ill conduct, conſiſting of a ſtrange mixture of inſolence and avarice, of meanneſs and magnificence, they were deſpiſed, perſecuted and affronted by all around them. Their pigs were worried, their poultry murdered, their dogs poiſoned, their game deſtroy'd, their hedges broke, and their hay-ſtacks ſet on fire. They were hiſſed and hooted at; and now and then a great pair of horns were fixed on their gates; an inſult at which they were highly enraged, but the meaning of which neither Sir Harry, nor my lady, not even with the aſſiſtance of the colonel, could ever gueſs at.

I soon grew weary of this land of contention and uneaſineſs; and having recourſe to the old excuſe of urgent buſineſs, I took my leave, and went poſt to town; reflecting all the way with ſurpriſe on the ingenuity of mankind, to render themſelves at once miſerable and ridiculous; and lamenting that the happineſs and innocence of rural life are now ſcarce any where to be found.

A

FREE INQUIRY

INTO THE

NATURE and ORIGIN

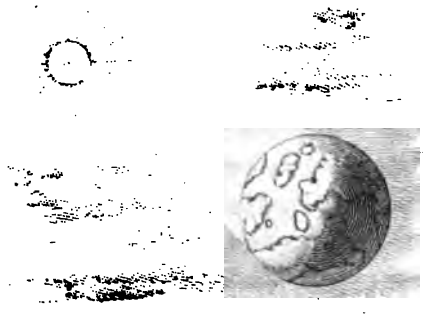
OF

EVIL.

In SIX LETTERS to ——.

The FIFTH EDITION.

With an additional Preface, and ſome explanatory Notes.



PREFACE

To the FOURTH EDITION.

THE author of the following letters is too well acquainted with human nature, to be in the leaſt ſurpriſed at the reception they have met with; that is, that they have been much liked, much cenſured, and little aſſented to: Truth, he knows, has at all times been ſo received; for, tho' by her native beauty ſhe is ſure to charm, yet from her repugnancy to moſt men's intereſts, ſhe is ſeldom welcome: politicians are afraid of her, parties deteſt her, and all profeſſions agree, that ſhe is mad, and very dangerous if ſuffered to go about in public: he knows, that mankind live all in maſquerade, and that whoever preſumes to come amongſt them barefaced muſt expect to be abuſed by the whole aſſembly: he could therefore have no motive for thus imparting his free ſentiments to the public, except the dictates of his own heart, which tell him, that it is every man's duty, who comes into the world, to uſe his beſt

endeavours, however inſignificant, to leave it as much wiſer, and as much better as he can. Induced by this motive alone, he at firſt undertook this Inquiry; and now, actuated by the ſame principle, and unprovoked by all the ſenſeleſs miſapprehenſions, and malicious miſconſtructions, with which it has been tortured, he will here, with all poſſible conciſeneſs, endeavour to explain thoſe parts of it, which have been ſo miſunderſtood, or miſrepreſented, and give ſatisfaction to all, who are either able or willing to underſtand it.

The firſt letter treats of Evils in general, and endeavours to prove, that they all owe their exiſtence, not to any voluntary admiſſion of a benevolent Creator, but to the neceſſity of their own natures, that is, to the impoſſibility of excluding them from any ſyſtem of created Beings whatever; and that in all ſuch ſyſtems, however wiſely contrived, they muſt have, and muſt at all times have had a place. Againſt this, but one material objection has been urged; which is this, that, in order to make room for this neceſſity of Evil, the real exiſtence of a paradiſiacal ſtate is repreſented as at all times impoſſible; and conſequently, the Moſaic Account of that ſtate is utterly exploded, on which the whole fabric of the Chriſtian Religion is erected. How far the literal belief of that account is eſſential to the true faith of a Chriſtian, need not be here decided; becauſe

cauſe not the leaſt mention of it is made in this letter; and therefore this objection is intirely founded on a miſtake. The argument there made uſe of, is only this, that ſome have endeavoured to juſtify the goodneſs of God from the introduction of Evil, by aſſerting, that at the beginning there was no ſuch thing, but that, at firſt, all creation came out of his omnipotent hand, endued with abſolute perfection, and free from all Evil, both natural and moral: to ſhew, that this was an ancient opinion, ſome lines are quoted from Ovid's Metamorphoſis, deſcribing the Golden Age, in ſuch a ſtate of perfect happineſs and innocence; on which the Author, thinking them to be no part of any one's creed, imagined himſelf at liberty to obſerve, that from the nature of man, and the nature of this terreſtrial globe, which he inhabits, the real exiſtence of ſuch a ſtate ſeemed impoſſible; and therefore, that theſe deſcriptions of it could be nothing more, than amuſing dreams, and inchanting fables. This bears not the leaſt reference to the Moſaic account of Paradiſe, in which ſuch a ſtate of abſolute perfection, void of all Evil, is ſo far from being deſcribed, that the Serpent, or the Devil, the parent of all Evil, is one of the principal characters of that Hiſtory; which therefore by no means contradicts the propoſition here aſſerted.

THE ſecond Letter undertakes to ſhew, that Evils of Imperfection are in truth no Evils at all; but only the abſence of comparative good, reſulting ſolely from the neceſſary inferiority of ſome Beings with regard to others, which cannot be prevented in a ſyſtem of creation, whoſe very eſſence conſiſts in a chain of ſubordination, deſcending from infinite perfection to abſolute nothing. To this likewiſe one objection only has been made; which is, that no ſuch chain of ſubordinate Beings, reaching from infinite perfection to abſolute nothing, can, in fact, exiſt; for this notable reaſon: becauſe no being can approach next to infinite perfection; nor any be contiguous to nothing. But this argument being no more than a quibble on metaphyſical terms, to which no preciſe ideas are affixed, neither deſerves, nor is capable of an anſwer.

The third Letter treats of Natural Evils; and attempts to ſhew that moſt of theſe, which we complain of, are derived likewiſe from the ſame ſource; that is, from the imperfection of our natures, and our ſtation in the univerſal ſyſtem: to this are added three conjectures; firſt, that many of our miſeries may be owing to ſome ſecret, but invincible diſpoſition in the nature of things, that renders it impracticable to produce pleaſure excluſive of pain; a certain degree of

which

which muſt therefore be endured by individuals, for the happineſs and well-being of the whole: ſecondly, that many other of our miſeries may be inflicted on us by the agency of ſuperior Beings, to whoſe benefit they may poſſibly be as conducive as the deaths and ſufferings of inferior animals are to ours, and, laſtly, that by the ancient doctrine of Tranſmigration, the miſeries, which for the ſake of general utility we are obliged to ſuffer in one life, may be recompenced in another, and ſo the divine goodneſs be ſufficiently juſtified from the admiſſion of them all. To every one of theſe ſome objections have been made: againſt the firſt, it has been alledged, that this impracticability to produce pleaſure, without pain, whence ariſes this utility of the ſufferings of individuals for the good of the whole, is merely a production of the Author's own daring imagination, founded on no reaſon, and ſupported by no proof. To which he anſwers, that he propoſes it as a conjecture only; but cannot think it ill-founded, ſince it is confirmed by the appearance of every thing around us, and ſince it is reaſonable to believe, that a benevolent Creator would not have permitted his creatures to have ſuffered on any other terms. In ridicule of the ſecond conjecture, it has been aſked, with an air of humour, whether we can think it credible, that ſuperior beings ſhould ride, or hunt, or roaſt, or eat us, as we make uſe of inferior animals? Which queſtion

is moſt properly to be anſwered by another: whether, in the unbounded ſyſtem of creation, there may not be numberleſs methods, by which beings of different orders may be ſubſervient to each others uſes, totally above the reach of our comprehenſions? To doubt of which would be like the incredulity of the ignorant peaſant, who can ſcarce be perſuaded to believe that there is any thing in the world, ſome ſpecimen of which he has not beheld within the narrow limits of his own pariſh. To the laſt it is objected, that the doctrine of Tranſmigration being only the fanciful and exploded opinion of ſome ancient Philoſophers, in the times of darkneſs, ought not, by the Author, to have been here advanced in direct contradiction to the faith and tenets of the Chriſtian religion: to which he replies, that he neither propoſes this doctrine as an article of his own belief, or impoſes it on others; but mentions it only as the moſt rational conjecture of the human mind, uninformed by ſupernatural aſſiſtance concerning a future ſtate: that it is confirmed by Revelation he does not pretend, but that it directly contradicts it, by no means appears; ſo ſilent are the Scriptures concerning the ſtate of the ſoul between death and the reſurrection, that the moſt learned divines ſtill widely differ on that ſubject; ſome maintaining that it enters immediately into a ſtate of retribution; others, of ſleep; and others, of purgation from paſt offences: why therefore is it more repugnant

pugnant to the ſenſe of theſe writings, to ſuppoſe, that it may poſſibly animate other bodies during that period, and, at the laſt day, receive ſuch puniſhments or rewards as is due on the whole account of its paſt behaviour? Thus the probability of every one of theſe conjectures ſeems to be ſufficiently eſtabliſhed, and they appear perfectly conſiſtent with reaſon, and not at all contradictory to revelation.

THE fourth Letter endeavours to account for Moral Evil: the moſt arduous Part of the whole undertaking; to which end it attempts to ſhew, that the common opinion, which derives it ſolely from the abuſe of free-will in man, is ineffectual for that purpoſe; and that therefore, though its very eſſence conſiſts in the production of natural Evil, yet it could never have been admitted into the works of a juſt and beneficent Creator, if it had not ſome remote and collateral tendency to univerſal good, by anſwering ſome ends beneficial to the immenſe, and incomprehenſible whole: one of which may poſſibly be the converſion of unpreventable miſeries into juſt puniſhments by the production of guilt, without which they muſt have been inflicted on perfect innocence. To this account of the origin of Moral Evil, not only many weighty objections have been made, but on it many imputations have been laid, of a moſt formidable nature, as that it makes God the cauſe

of all wickedneſs, deſtroys Free-will in man, and conſequently roots up the foundation of all Virtue, and Morality whatever; and it is, moreover, charged with inconſiſtency and ſelf-contradiction thro' every part. To all this the Author replies only, that he is aſſured, that, if any intelligent reader will peruſe the whole Letter together with candor, and attention, it will evidently appear, that theſe accuſations are entirely groundleſs. He makes no manner of doubt, but that man is endued with Free-will, and is juſtly puniſhable for the abuſe of it; and hopes he has ſo expreſſed himſelf, through this whole piece, as to leave no uncertainty of his opinion on that queſtion: all he means is, that though the abuſe of Free-will is undoubtedly the immediate cauſe of Moral Evil, yet it cannot from thence derive its original admiſſion into the works of a benevolent Creator; becauſe man, not being a ſelf-exiſtent and independent being, muſt receive that Will itſelf, together with his nature and formation, from the ſupreme Author of all things: for which reaſon he cannot apprehend, that the general wickedneſs of mankind can be an accident proceeding from their unforeſeen wrong elections, by which the whole benevolent ſyſtem is defeated; but muſt be a part, and a material part too, of the original plan of creation, wiſely calculated by the incomprehenſible operations of vice, and puniſhment, to promote the good and happineſs of the whole.

For,

For, to aſſert, that any thing has happened which God did not intend, or that he intended any thing which did not happen, is a language, which may be allowed to the Poet or the Orator, but never to the Philoſopher; unleſs we can ſuppoſe, that Omniſcience can be diſappointed, and Omnipotence defeated. As to inconſiſtency, he denies not the charge; but believes he is not more inconſiſtent than all who have undertaken to write on the ſame ſubject: the Scriptures themſelves are guilty of the ſame ſeeming inconſiſtency on this head; they all repreſent man as a Being perfectly free, puniſhable, and puniſhed for his miſbehaviour; yet as conſtantly ſpeak of him as a creature deriving all his thought, will, and diſpoſitions from his Creator, and under his perpetual influence, and direction; the appearance of inconſiſtency, in which two propoſitions, both undoubtedly true, proceeds only from our ignorance in the nature, and limits of free-will, and divine influence, and our inability to comprehend them. In the latter part of this Letter a few hints are flung out, to ſhew that on the principles of the foregoing theory ſome of the moſt abſtruſe doctrines of the chriſtian revelation, of original ſin, grace, predeſtination, and vicarious puniſhment, might be rendered reconcileable to the ſtricteſt reaſon; a propoſal from whence ſurely much advantage might accrue to the cauſe of chriſtianity

in general, and by which poſſibly ſome articles of our own Church might be proved to be much leſs incompatible with common ſenſe than they are thought to be by all thoſe, who will not ſubſcribe them, and by many, who do: with this, two claſſes of men are particularly offended; the rational diſſenters, as they pleaſe to call themſelves, and the methodiſts: the former of theſe having arbitrarily expunged out of their Bibles every thing, which appears to them contradictory to reaſon, that is, to their own reaſon, or, in other words, every thing which they cannot underſtand, are diſpleaſed to ſee thoſe tenets explained, which they have thought proper to reject: the latter having embraced theſe very doctrines only becauſe they appeared unintelligible, are unwilling to ſee them cleared up, and afraid leſt thoſe dark and thorny covers ſhould be laid open, under which they have ſo long ſheltered themſelves from the rays of reaſon: with either of theſe all debate would be vain, and uſeleſs, becauſe the firſt, though for the moſt part honeſt, religious, and learned men, are unable to comprehend any reaſoning, which ſoars above the limits of their own confined literature, and education; and the others are determined to liſten to no reaſoning at all, having with all reaſon and common ſenſe declared eternal warfare.

THE

THE deſign of the fifth Letter is to ſhew, that in the government of ſuch imperfect creatures as men over each other there muſt be much unavoidable Evil: that all human governments, whether of the monarchcial, popular, or mixed kinds, were at firſt founded on force or intereſt, and muſt ever be ſupported by the ſame means, that is, by compulſion, or corruption, both of which muſt be productive of innumerable Evils; that theſe ought not to be imputed to God, becauſe he could not have prevented them without the total alteration of human nature; much leſs can they be eradicated by men; but that they may in ſome meaſure be leſſened by the diminution of moral Evil, from which all political Evils are derived; and therefore that we ought quietly to ſubmit to theſe Evils, when they do not ariſe to any intolerable degree, and to apply principally that remedy to the faults of government, which is ever the moſt effectual, that is, the amendment of our own. It is no wonder, that a leſſon ſo diſagreeable to the reſtleſs humours of moſt men, and ſo repugnant to the arts, and ends of faction, ſhould call up againſt the Author, many opponents, who have liberally beſtowed on him the titles of an enemy to Liberty, and an advocate for corruption, with the ſame juſtice that a phyſician might be ſtiled an enemy to health, and an advocate for the gout, who in that diſtemper preſcribes patience,

tience, and temperance, rather than ſuch inflaming medicines as might convert it into a more dangerous diſeaſe. All that he has aſſerted in this Letter amounts to no more than this: that no government can ſubſiſt without ſome principle of governing; that is, that men cannot be governed without ſome means by which their obedience can be obtained; a propoſition, which ſeems as inconteſtible, as that every effect muſt have a cauſe. That all government muſt be diſagreeable to thoſe who are governed, is demonſtrable from the nature and eſſence of government itſelf, which being nothing more, than a compulſion of individuals to act in ſuch a manner in ſupport of ſociety, as they are neither wiſe, nor honeſt enough to do from the ſuggeſtions of their own heads, or hearts, this compulſion muſt be contrary to both their judgments, and inclinations, and conſequently diſagreeable, and for that reaſon perpetually reſiſted: ſome method muſt therefore be made uſe of to overcome this reſiſtance, and what that method can be, except force, or intereſt, he cannot find out: he is an advocate for neither, except from their neceſſity; and, if any one will point out another, he will readily declare his diſapprobation of them both.

The ſixth and laſt Letter proceeds upon the ſame plan as the reſt, and endeavours to ſhew, that religious Evils, that is, the defects ſo viſible in

in all human religions, and the miſchievous conſequences reſulting from them, are not owing to any want of wiſdom or goodneſs in our Creator, but proceed, like all others, from our nature, and ſituation, and the impracticability of giving a perfect religion to an imperfect creature. In order to explain this, it was neceſſary to point out the particular imperfections, which in fact do exiſt in all human religions, whether natural or revealed; not with any deſign to depreciate the one, or to invalidate the authority of the other, but only to account for them conſiſtently with God's wiſdom, and benevolence: thoſe charged upon natural religion have been readily enough agreed to, but thoſe imputed to revelation have offended many, who have from thence conſidered the whole of this inquiry as intended ſecretly to undermine the foundations of Chriſtianity, than which nothing can be more averſe from the intentions, as well as from the ſentiments of the Author; but indeed many late deiſtical writers have attacked that religion ſo unfairly, by inſinuating many cavils, which they dared not expreſs, that they have made it very difficult for any one to treat freely on that ſubject, without incurring the ſuſpicion of the ſame inſincerity: of all ſuch diſingenuous artifices the Author ſincerely declares his utmoſt deteſtation, and begs to be underſtood to mean all that he expreſſes, and nothing more: he ſolemnly profeſſes, that by recounting theſe imperfections,

he

he is ſo far from entertaining any ſecret deſigns deſtructive to that ſacred inſtitution, that by it he intended not only to wreſt out of the hands of infidelity thoſe weapons, with which it has ever been moſt ſucceſsfully aſſaulted, but alſo to obviate all thoſe doubts and difficulties, which frequently occur to the minds of thinking men, though no infidels, on viewing the deplorable ſtate in which all human religion has continued throughout all ages, and the ineffectual aſſiſtance it has received even from this divine interpoſition itſelf, by no means exempted from numberleſs Evils, and Imperfections: to thoſe, who perceive none of theſe Imperfections, and conſequential Evils, he means not to write, nor deſires to let in any new light on their tender organs, which can ſerve only to diſturb their preſent repoſe; nor does he aſpire to the honour of working for thoſe middle-ſized underſtandings, who can be well fitted with ready-made arguments from every Pulpit: to the learned, impartial, ſagacious, and inquiſitive, he alone applies, the eſtabliſhing one of whom in a rational and well-grounded belief of the Chriſtian Religion does more real ſervice to that cauſe, than the enliſting legions under that denomination whoſe immoveable faith proceeds only from their ignorance; that is, who believing without any reaſon, can poſſibly have no reaſon for doubting. To account for the Corruption of religion, it was neceſſary to ſpecify the particular

abuſes, and abuſers of it: and here the Author could ſcarcely overlook the Clergy: but he hopes that nothing has eſcaped his pen, that can throw the leaſt reflection upon them as Clergy, but as men only, ſubject to the ſame imperfections, and actuated by the ſame paſſions as other men, and purſuing the ends of ſelf-intereſt and ambition by the ſame paths, in which all others would have trod, conducted by the ſame temptations, and opportunities: he has treated them with no more freedom than he has done Princes and Parliaments, Miniſters and Patriots, Conquerors and Heroes, and his work would admit of no partiality; ſure he is, that nothing he has ſaid can bear the moſt diſtant relation to the preſent Clergy of this country, whom he ſincerely thinks are a body of men as honeſt, learned, and unprejudiced, as ever exiſted, and for whoſe perſons, and profeſſion, he has the higheſt regard. In another part of this Letter there is an aſſertion, which has given ſome offence; which is, that every religion muſt be corrupted as ſoon as it becomes eſtabliſhed; this has been thought a reflection upon all national churches, and a perſuaſion to ſchiſm, and diſſention; but thoſe, who think thus, totally miſapprehend the tenor of this whole work, which endeavours to prove, that every thing human muſt be attended with Evils, which therefore ought to be ſubmitted to with patience and reſignation; that many imperfections will adhere to all

govern-

governments and religions in the hands of men, but that theſe, unleſs they riſe to an intolerable degree, will not juſtify our reſiſtance to the one, or our diſſention from the other: the aſſertion itſelf, the Author cannot retract, but the inference, which he deſires may be drawn from it, is by no means favourable to diſſentions, becauſe from them he can perceive no remedy, which can accrue to theſe Evils: for if it was every one's duty to deſert a national church on account of thoſe corruptions which proceed from its eſtabliſhment, and this duty was univerſally complied with, let us ſee the conſequence! one of theſe things muſt neceſſarily follow: either that ſome diſſention of ſuperior purity, which uſually ariſes from its being a diſſention, muſt be eſtabliſhed in its room; or no religion muſt be eſtabliſhed at all: if the firſt of theſe methods ſhould take place, the end propoſed by it would by itſelf be entirely defeated; becauſe that purer religion which was eſtabliſhed would by that very eſtabliſhment become equally corrupt with that, which was deſerted, and ſo the ſame reaſon would eternally remain for a new diſſention: if the latter ſhould be taken, that is, to eſtabliſh no religion at all; this would be ſo far from producing the intended reformation, that it would let in ſuch an inundation of enthuſiaſm, and contradictory abſurdities, as muſt in a ſhort time deſtroy not only all religion, but all peace, and morality whatever: of which no one can entertain

the leaſt doubt, who is not totally unacquainted both with the nature, and hiſtory of mankind. From whence it is plain, that all diſſentions from a national church, not in itſelf ſinful, ariſe from ignorance; that is, from a kind of ſhort-ſightedneſs, which enables men to pry out every imperfection within their reach, but prevents their diſcerning the more remote neceſſity for thoſe imperfections, and the danger of amending them.

To conclude, the Author of this inquiry having heard it ſo much, and as he thought ſo unjuſtly calumniated, has reviewed it with all poſſible care, and impartiality; and though he finds many things in the ſtyle, and compoſition, which have need enough of amendment, he ſees nothing in the ſentiments which ought to be retracted. His intentions were to reconcile the numerous Evils ſo conſpicuous in the Creation, with the wiſdom, power, and goodneſs of the Creator; to ſhew, that no more of them are admitted by him, than are neceſſary towards promoting univerſal good; and from thence to perſuade men to an intire reſignation to his all-wiſe, but incomprehenſible diſpenſations. To aſcertain the nature of virtue, and to enforce the practice of it: to prove the certainty of a future ſtate, and the juſtice of the rewards and puniſhments that will attend it: to recommend ſubmiſſion to national governments, and conformity to national religions, notwithſtanding

ſtanding the Evils and Defects, which muſt unavoidably adhere to them; and laſtly, to ſhew the excellence and credibility of the Chriſtian revelation, to reconcile ſome of its moſt abſtruſe doctrines with reaſon, and to anſwer all thoſe objections to its authority, which have been drawn from its imperfections, and abuſes. Theſe, and theſe only, were the intentions of the Author; and if, after all, a work ſo deſigned, however unably executed, ſhould by the united force of ignorance, and malevolence, of faction, bigotry, and enthuſiaſm, be repreſented as introductive of fataliſm, immorality, ſlavery, corruption, and infidelity, he ſhall be little concerned, and ſhall only look upon it as an additional inſtance of that Imperfection of mankind, which he has here treated of: from them he deſires only an exemption from calumny: honour and applauſe he has not the vanity to hope for; theſe, he knows, they beſtow not on their benefactors, or inſtructors, but reſerve for thoſe alone, who deceive, diſturb, and deſtroy them.

LET-

LETTER I.

ON

EVIL in general.

I

LETTER I.

On EVIL in general.

SIR,

HAVING enjoyed the pleaſure of many accidental conferences with you on metaphyſical, moral, political, and religious ſubjects; on which you ever ſeemed to converſe with more ſagacity, as well as more candor, than is uſual on the like occaſions; I imagined it might not be unentertaining either to you, or myſelf, to put together my ſentiments on theſe important topics, and communicate them to you from time to time as the abſence of buſineſs, or of more agreeable amuſements may afford me opportunity. This I propoſe to do under the general Title of an Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil; an Inquiry, which will comprehend them all, and

which, I think, has never been attended to with that diligence it deſerves, nor with that ſucceſs, which might have been hoped for from that little that has been beſtowed upon it. The right underſtanding of this abſtruſe ſpeculation, I look upon to be the only ſolid foundation, on which any rational ſyſtem of Ethicks can be built; for it ſeems impoſſible, that men ſhould ever arrive at any juſt ideas of their Creator, or his Attributes, any proper notions of their relation to him, or their duty to each other, without firſt ſettling in their minds ſome ſatisfactory ſolution of this important queſtion, *Whence came Evil?* Whilſt we find ourſelves liable to innumerable miſeries in this life; apprehenſive of ſtill greater in another, and can give no probable account of this our wretched ſituation, what ſentiments muſt we entertain of the juſtice and benevolence of our Creator, who placed us in it, without our ſolicitations, or conſent? The Works of the Creation ſufficiently demonſtrate his exiſtence; their beauty, perfection and magnificence, his infinite power and wiſdom; but it is the Happineſs only, which we enjoy, or hope for, which can convince us of his Goodneſs.

It is the ſolution therefore of this important queſtion alone, that can aſcertain the moral Characteriſtic of God, and upon that only muſt all human Virtue eternally depend.

If

If there's a Power above us,
(And that there is all Nature cries aloud
Thro' all her works) he muſt delight in Virtue;
And that which he delights in, muſt be happy.

But ſhould this divine reaſoning of the philoſopher be at laſt inconcluſive; could we once entertain ſuch blaſphemous notions of the Supreme Being, as that He might not delight in Virtue, neither adhere to it himſelf, nor reward it in others; that He could make any part of his creation miſerable, or ſuffer them to make themſelves ſo without a juſt cauſe, and a benevolent end; all moral conſiderations muſt be vain, and uſeleſs; we can have no rule by which to direct our actions, nor, if we had, any kind of obligation to purſue it: nor in this caſe can any Revelation in the leaſt aſſiſt us, the belief of all Revelation being in its own nature ſubſequent, not only to the belief of God's exiſtence, but of his juſtice and veracity; for if God can injure us, he may alſo deceive us; and then there is an end of all diſtinctions between good and evil, truth and falſehood, and of all confidence in God or Man.

I MEAN not by this to inſinuate the leaſt poſſibility of a doubt concerning the Juſtice or Goodneſs of our Creator, but only to ſhew the importance of this Inquiry, and the utility of it towards

ſettling our notions of his Attributes, and the regulation of our own behaviour in conformity to them. I intend not by it to prove the benevolence of God, but to reconcile the miſeries we ſee and ſuffer, with that uncontrovertable benevolence. I deſign not to ſhew that God approves Virtue, but that the admiſſion of moral Evil is not inconſiſtent with that undoubted approbation: nor would I be underſtood to aſſert, that our obligation to be virtuous depends on this abſtruſe Speculation, but only that our right underſtanding it will remove all doubts concerning the nature of Virtue, and our obligation to purſue it, and fix them on the moſt firm, and immoveable Baſis.

To find out therefore how Evil of any kind can be the production of infinite Goodneſs, joined with infinite Power, ſhould be the firſt ſtep in all our religious inquiries; the examination into which wonderful paradox will lead us into many uſeful and ſublime truths; and its perfect comprehenſion, was that poſſible for our narrow capacities, would, I doubt not, make as ſurpriſing diſcoveries in the Moral World, as mathematical and phyſical knowledge have in the Natural.

To clear up this difficulty, ſome ancient Philoſophers have had recourſe to the ſuppoſition of two firſt Cauſes, one Good, and the other Evil, perpetually counteracting each other's deſigns. This

This ſyſtem was afterwards adopted by the *Manichean* Hereſy, and has ſince been defended by the ingenious *Monſ. Bayle*: but as the ſuppoſition of two firſt Cauſes is even in itſelf a contradiction, and as the whole ſcheme has been demonſtrated by the beſt metaphyſical Writers to be as falſe as it is impious, all further arguments to diſprove it would be needleſs.

Others have endeavoured to account for this by the introduction of a Golden Age, or Paradiſaical State, in which all was innocence and happineſs.

Pœnæ metuſque aberant, nec verba minacia fixo
Ære legebantur, nec ſupplex turba timebant
Judicis ora ſui; ſed erant ſine vindice tuti.

When Man yet new,
No rule but uncorrupted reaſon knew,
And with a native bent did Good purſue;
Unforc'd by puniſhment, unaw'd by fear,
His words were ſimple, and his ſoul ſincere:
Needleſs was written law, when none oppreſt,
The law of Man was written in his breaſt:
No ſuppliant crowds before the Judge appear'd,
No court erected yet, nor cauſe was heard,
But all was ſafe, for Conſcience was their Guard.

Ver erat æternum, placidiſque tepentibus auris
Mulcebant Zephyri natos ſine ſemine flores;

Nec etiam frugum tellus inarata ferebat,
Nec renovatus ager gravidis canebat aristis,
Flumina jam lactis, jam flumina nectaris ibant,
Flavaque de viridi stillabant ilice mella.

The flow'rs unsown in fields and meadows reign'd,
And Western Winds immortal spring maintain'd.
In following years the bearded corn ensu'd
From Earth unask'd, nor was that Earth renew'd.
From veins of valleys milk and nectar broke,
And honey sweated from the pores of Oak.

Amusing dreams! as absurd in philosophy, as in poetry delightful! For tho' it is probable, from the most ancient histories, as well as from analogy drawn from the rest of Nature's productions, that the World might be more happy and more innocent in its infancy, than in more advanced Ages, yet that it could ever be totally free from Vice and Misery, may easily, I think, be proved impossible, both from the nature of this terrestrial Globe, and the nature of its Inhabitants. So that these inchanting Scenes can in fact never have existed: but, if they had, the short duration of this perfection is equally inconsistent with infinite Power, joined to infinite Wisdom and Goodness, as any original imperfection whatever. Fables then of this kind can never in the least account for the Origin of Evil: they are all but mean expedients, which will never be able to take away

the

the difficulty, and can at moſt but obſcure it, by ſhifting it a little backward into a leſs clear light; like that *Indian* philoſophy, accounting for the ſupport of the World, which informs us, that it is ſuſtained by a vaſt Elephant, and that Elephant by a Tortoiſe, and then prudently drops any further inquiry.

THUS Divines and Moraliſts of later Ages ſeem perfectly ſatisfied that they have looſed this Gordian knot, by imputing the ſource of all Evil to the abuſe of Free-will in Created Beings. God, they ſay, never deſigned any ſuch thing ſhould exiſt as Evil, moral or natural; but that giving to ſome Beings, for good and wiſe purpoſes, a power of Free-agency, they perverted this power to bad ends, contrary to his intentions and commands; and thus their accidental wickedneſs produced conſequential Miſery. But to ſuppoſe in this manner, that God intended all things to be good and happy, and at the ſame time gave being to creatures able and willing to obſtruct his benevolent deſigns, is a notion ſo inconſiſtent with his wiſdom, goodneſs, omniſcience, and omnipotence, that it ſeems equally unphiloſophical, and more evidently abſurd, than the other. They have been led into this error by ridiculouſly judging of the diſpenſations of a Creator to his Creatures, by the ſame rules which they apply to the dealings of Men towards each other; between which there

is not the leaſt proportion or ſimilitude. A Man who endeavours, to the utmoſt of his power, to make others virtuous and happy, however unſucceſsful, is ſufficiently juſtified; but in a Being omnipotent and omniſcient, the Cauſe of all cauſes, the Origin of all thought, will, and action; who ſees all things paſt, preſent, and to come, in one inſtantaneous view, the caſe is widely different; his active and permiſſive will muſt be exactly the ſame; and, in regard to him, all conſequential and future Evils, thro' every moment of time, are actually preſent.

SINCE therefore none of theſe pretended ſolutions can, I am certain, give ſatisfaction to your comprehenſive underſtanding, let us now try to find out one more rational, and more conſiſtent with the analogy of every thing around us.

THAT there is a Supreme Being infinitely powerful, wiſe, and benevolent, the great Creator and Preſerver of all things, is a truth ſo clearly demonſtrated, that it ſhall here be taken for granted. That there is alſo in the univerſal ſyſtem of Things, the works of his almighty hand, much miſery and wickedneſs, that is, much natural and moral Evil, is another truth, of which every hour's fatal experience cannot fail to convince us. How theſe two undoubted, yet ſeeming contradictory truths can be reconciled, that is, how

Evils

Evils of any ſort could have place in the works of an omnipotent and good Being, is very difficult to account for. If we aſſert that he could not prevent them, we deſtroy his power; if that he would not, we arraign his goodneſs; and therefore his power and goodneſs cannot both be infinite.

But however concluſive this argument may ſeem, there is ſomewhere or other an error in it; and this error I take to ariſe from our wrong notions of omnipotence. Omnipotence cannot work contradictions, it can only effect all poſſible things. But ſo little are we acquainted with the whole ſyſtem of Nature, that we know not what are poſſible, and what are not: but if we may judge from that conſtant mixture of pain with pleaſure, and of inconvenience with advantage, which we muſt obſerve in every thing around us, we have reaſon to conclude, that to endue created Beings with perfection, that is, to produce Good exclusive of Evil, is one of thoſe impoſſibilities which even infinite Power cannot accompliſh.

The true ſolution then of this incomprehenſible paradox muſt be this, that all Evils owe their exiſtence ſolely to the neceſſity of their own natures; by which I mean, they could not poſſibly have been prevented, without the loſs of ſome ſuperior Good, or the permiſſion of ſome greater

Evil

Evil than themſelves; or that many Evils will unavoidably inſinuate themſelves by the natural relations and circumſtances of things, into the moſt perfect ſyſtem of Created Beings, even in oppoſition to the will of an almighty Creator, by reaſon they cannot be excluded without working contradictions; which not being proper objects of power, it is no diminution of omnipotence to affirm that it cannot effect them.

And here it will be proper to make a previous apology for an expreſſion, which will frequently occur in the following pages, which is, that God cannot do ſuch and ſuch things; by which is always to be underſtood not any retrenchment of the divine omnipotence, but only that ſuch things are in their own natures impracticable, and impoſſible to be performed.

That the Almighty ſhould be thus limited, and circumſcribed by the nature of things, of which he himſelf is the Author, may to ſome ſeem not very intelligible: but ſurely it is not at all difficult to conceive, that in every poſſible method of ordering, diſpoſing, and framing the univerſal ſyſtem of things, ſuch numberleſs inconveniences might neceſſarily ariſe, that all that infinite Power and Wiſdom could do, was to make choice of that method, which was attended with the leaſt and feweſt; and this not proceeding from any

defect

defect of power in the Creator, but from that imperfection which is inherent in the nature of all created things.

THIS neceſſity, I imagine, is what the Ancients meant by Fate, to which they fancied that *Jupiter*, and all the Gods, were obliged to ſubmit, and which was to be controuled by no Power whatever. The *Stoicks* ſeem to have had ſome dark and unintelligible notions of this kind, which they neither underſtood themſelves, nor knew how to explain to others; that the untractableneſs of Matter was the cauſe of Evil; that God would have made all things perfect, but that there was in Matter an evil bias repugnant to his benevolence, which drew another way, whence aroſe all manner of Evils. Of the like kind is a Maxim of the ſame Philoſophers, That Pain is no Evil; which, if aſſerted with regard to the individuals who ſuffer it, is downright nonſenſe; but if conſidered as it affects the univerſal Syſtem, is an undoubted truth, and means only that there is no more pain in it than what is neceſſary to the production of happineſs. How many ſoever of theſe Evils then force themſelves into the Creation, ſo long as the Good preponderates, it is a work well worthy of infinite Wiſdom and Benevolence; and notwithſtanding the imperfections of its parts, the whole is moſt undoubtedly perfect.

HENCE

HENCE then we may plainly ſee that much Evil may exiſt, not at all inconſiſtent with the power and goodneſs of God: and the further we purſue this clue, the more we ſhall at every ſtep diſcern new lights break out, which will diſcover clearly numberleſs examples, where the infinite power and goodneſs of God is fairly reconcileable with the miſery and wickedneſs of his Creatures, from the impoſſibility of preventing them; and if, in the very ſmall part of the univerſal Syſtem that lies within the reach of our imperfect capacities, many inſtances of this kind appear, in which they are viſibly conſiſtent, we ought with the utmoſt aſſurance to conclude, what is undoubtedly true, that they are really ſo in all, tho' we are not able to comprehend them. This is the kind of Faith moſt worthy of the human underſtanding, and moſt meritorious in the ſight of God, as it is the offspring of Reaſon, as well as the Parent of all Virtue and Reſignation to the juſt, but unſcrutable diſpenſations of Providence.

BUT, in order more clearly to explain this abſtruſe ſpeculation, it will be neceſſary to divide Evils into their different ſpecies, and beſtow on each a ſeparate conſideration. This I ſhall do under the following heads: Evils of Imperfection,

Natural Evils, Moral Evils, Political Evils, and Religious Evils; which, I think, will comprehend moſt of thoſe to which human Nature is unhappily liable. And now, Sir, leſt I ſhould add one more Evil to this melancholy Catalogue, which is that of a long and tedious Epiſtle, I ſhall reſerve the examination into each of theſe particulars for the ſubject of a future Letter; and conclude this, by aſſuring you, that I am,

SIR, &c.

LET-

LETTER II.

ON

EVILS of Imperfection.

I

LETTER II.

On Evils of Imperfection.

SIR,

IN purſuance of the plan propoſed in my laſt, I ſhall now proceed to examine into the Nature of each particular kind of Evil, and in the firſt place of thoſe therein denominated Evils of Imperfection; which are in truth no Evils at all, but rather the abſence of ſome comparative Good; and therefore I ſhall not have occaſion to detain you long on this part of my ſubject.

No ſyſtem can poſſibly be formed, even in imagination, without a ſubordination of parts. Every animal body muſt have different members, ſubſervient to each other; every picture muſt be compoſed of various colours, and of light and ſhade; all harmony muſt be formed of trebles, tenors, and baſſes; every beautiful and uſeful edifice

muſt conſiſt of higher and lower, more and leſs magnificent apartments. This is in the very eſſence of all created things, and therefore cannot be prevented by any means whatever, unleſs by not creating them at all: for which reaſon, in the formation of the Univerſe, God was obliged, in order to carry on that juſt ſubordination ſo neceſſary to the very exiſtence of the whole, to create Beings of different ranks; and to beſtow on various ſpecies of animals, and alſo on the individuals of the ſame ſpecies, various degrees of underſtanding, ſtrength, beauty, and perfection; to the comparative want of which advantages we give the names of folly, weakneſs, deformity, and imperfection, and very unjuſtly repute them Evils; whereas in truth they are bleſſings as far as they extend, tho' of an inferior degree. They are no more actual Evils, than a ſmall eſtate is a real misfortune, becauſe many may be poſſeſſed of greater.

WHATEVER we enjoy, is purely a free gift from our Creator; but that we enjoy no more, can never ſure be deemed an injury, or a juſt reaſon to queſtion his infinite benevolence. All our happineſs is owing to his goodneſs; but that it is no greater, is owing only to ourſelves, that is, to our not having any inherent right to any happineſs, or even to any exiſtence at all. This is no more to be imputed to God, than the wants of a beggar

to the perſon who has relieved him: that he had ſomething was owing to his benefactor; but that he had no more only to his original poverty.

THEY who look upon the privation of all the good they ſee others enjoy, or think poſſible for infinite power to beſtow, as poſitive Evil, underſtand not that the Univerſe is a ſyſtem whoſe very eſſence conſiſts in ſubordination; a ſcale of Beings deſcending by inſenſible degrees from infinite perfection to abſolute nothing; in which, tho' we may juſtly expect to find perfection in the whole, could we poſſibly comprehend it; yet would it be the higheſt abſurdity to hope for it in all its parts, becauſe the beauty and happineſs of the whole depend altogether on the juſt inferiority of its parts, that is, on the comparative imperfections of the ſeveral Beings of which it is compoſed.

IT would have been no more an inſtance of God's wiſdom to have created no Beings but of the higheſt and moſt perfect order, than it would be of a painter's art, to cover his whole piece with one ſingle colour the moſt beautiful he could compoſe. Had he confined himſelf to ſuch, nothing could have exiſted but demi-gods, or archangels, and then all inferior orders muſt have been void and uninhabited: but as it is ſurely more agreeable to infinite benevolence, that all theſe ſhould be filled up with Beings capable of

enjoying happineſs themſelves, and contributing to that of others, they muſt neceſſarily be filled with inferior Beings, that is, with ſuch as are leſs perfect, but from whoſe exiſtence, notwithſtanding that leſs perfection, more felicity upon the whole accrues to the Univerſe, than if no ſuch had been created. It is moreover highly probable, that there is ſuch a connection between all ranks and orders by ſubordinate degrees, that they mutually ſupport each other's exiſtence, and every one in its place is abſolutely neceſſary towards ſuſtaining the whole vaſt and magnificent fabric.

You ſee therefore, that it is utterly impracticable, even for infinite power, to exclude from Creation this neceſſary inferiority of ſome Beings in compariſon with others. All that it can do is to make each as happy as their reſpective ſituations will permit: and this it has done in ſo extraordinary a manner, as to leave the benevolence of our great Creator not to be doubted of; for tho' he cannot make all ſuperior, yet in the diſpenſations of his bleſſings, his wiſdom and goodneſs both are well worthy the higheſt admiration; for, amongſt all the wide diſtinctions which he was obliged to make in the dignity and perfections of his Creatures, he has made much leſs in their happineſs than is uſually imagined, or indeed can be believed from outward appearances. He has given many advantages to Brutes, which Man

cannot attain to with all his ſuperiority, and many probably to Man which are denied to Angels; amongſt which his ignorance is perhaps none of the leaſt. With regard to him, tho' it was neceſſary to the great purpoſes of human life to beſtow riches, underſtanding, and health, on individuals in very partial proportions; yet has the Almighty ſo contrived the nature of things, that happineſs is diſtributed with a more equal hand. His goodneſs, we may obſerve, is always ſtriving with theſe our neceſſary imperfections, and ſetting bounds to the inconveniences it cannot totally prevent, by balancing the wants, and repaying the ſufferings of all by ſome kind of equivalent naturally reſulting from their particular ſituations and circumſtances. Thus, for example, poverty, or the want of riches, is generally compenſated by having more hopes, and fewer fears, by a greater ſhare of health, and a more exquiſite reliſh of the ſmalleſt enjoyments, than thoſe who poſſeſs them are uſually bleſſed with. The want of taſte and genius, with all the pleaſures that ariſe from them, are commonly recompenced by a more uſeful kind of common-ſenſe, together with a wonderful delight, as well as ſucceſs, in the buſy purſuits of a ſcrambling World. The ſufferings of the Sick are greatly relieved by many trifling gratifications imperceptible to others, and ſometimes almoſt repaid by the inconceivable tranſports occaſioned by the return of health and vi-

good. Folly cannot be very grievous, because imperceptible; and I doubt not but there is some truth in that rant of a mad Poet, that there is a pleasure in being mad, which none but Madmen know. Ignorance, or the want of knowledge and literature, the appointed lot of all born to poverty, and the drudgeries of life, is the only opiate capable of infusing that insensibility which can enable them to endure the miseries of the one, and the fatigues of the other. It is a cordial administered by the gracious hand of Providence, of which they ought never to be deprived by an ill-judged and improper Education. It is the basis of all subordination, the support of society, and the privilege of individuals: and I have ever thought it a most remarkable instance of the Divine Wisdom, that whereas in all animals, whose individuals rise little above the rest of their species, knowledge is instinctive; in Man, whose individuals are so widely different, it is acquired by Education; by which means the Prince and the Labourer, the Philosopher and the Peasant, are in some measure fitted for their respective situations. The same parental care extends to every part of the animal creation. Brutes are exempted from numberless anxieties, by that happy want of reflection on past, and apprehension of future sufferings, which are annexed to their inferiority. Those amongst them who devour others, are taught by Nature to dispatch them as easily and

possible;

poſſible; and Man, the moſt mercileſs devourer of all, is induced, by his own advantage, to feaſt thoſe deſigned for his ſuſtenance, the more luxuriouſly to feaſt upon them himſelf. Thus miſery, by all poſſible methods, is diminiſhed or repaid; and happineſs, like fluids, is ever tending towards an Equilibrium.

But was it ever ſo unequally divided, our pretence for complaint could be of this only, that we are not ſo high in the ſcale of exiſtence as our ignorant ambition may deſire: a pretence which muſt eternally ſubſiſt; becauſe, were we ever ſo much higher, there would be ſtill room for infinite power to exalt us; and ſince no link in the chain can be broke, the ſame reaſon for diſquiet muſt remain to thoſe who ſucceed to that chaſm, which muſt be occaſioned by our preferment. A Man can have no reaſon to repine, that he is not an Angel; nor a Horſe, that he is not a Man; much leſs, that in their ſeveral ſtations they poſſeſs not the faculties of another; for this would be an inſufferable misfortune. And doubtleſs it would be as inconvenient for a Man to be endued with the knowledge of an Angel, as for a Horſe to have the reaſon of a Man; but, as they are now formed by the conſummate wiſdom of their Creator, each enjoys pleaſures peculiar to his ſituation: and tho' the happineſs of one may perhaps conſiſt in divine Contemplation, of another

in

in the acquiſition of wealth and power, and that of a third in wandering amongſt limpid ſtreams, and luxuriant paſtures; yet the meaneſt of theſe enjoyments give no interruption to the moſt ſublime, but altogether undoubtedly increaſe the aggregate ſum of felicity beſtowed upon the Univerſe. Greatly indeed muſt that be leſſened, were there no Beings but of the higheſt orders. Did there not, for inſtance, exiſt on this terreſtrial Globe any ſenſitive creatures inferior to Man, how great a quantity of happineſs muſt have been loſt, which is now enjoyed by millions, who at preſent inhabit every part of its ſurface, in fields and gardens, in extended deſarts, impenetrable woods, and immenſe oceans; by monarchies of Bees, republics of Ants, and innumerable families of inſects dwelling on every leaf and flower, who are all poſſeſſed of as great a ſhare of pleaſure, and a greater of innocence, than their arrogant Sovereign, and at the ſame time not a little contribute to his convenience and happineſs!

Has God, thou Fool! work'd ſolely for thy good!
Thy Joy, thy Paſtime, thy attire, thy food!
Who for thy Table feeds the wanton Fawn,
For him as kindly ſpreads the flow'ry lawn.
Is it for thee the Lark aſcends and ſings?
Joy tunes his Voice, joy elevates his Wings.
Is it for thee the Linnet pours his Throat?
Loves of his own, and raptures, ſwell the note.

The

The bounding Steed you pompouſly beſtride,
Shares with his Lord the pleaſure and the pride.
Is thine alone the ſeed that ſtrews the plain?
The birds of Heav'n ſhall vindicate their grain.
Thine the full harveſt of the Golden Year?
Part pays, and juſtly, the deſerving Steer.

POPE.

THUS the Univerſe reſembles a large and well-regulated Family, in which all the officers and ſervants, and even the domeſtic animals, are ſubſervient to each other in a proper ſubordination: each enjoys the privileges and perquiſites peculiar to his place, and at the ſame time contributes by that juſt ſubordination to the magnificence and happineſs of the whole.

IT is evident, therefore, that theſe Evils of Imperfection, proceeding from the neceſſary inferiority of ſome Beings in compariſon of others, can in no ſenſe be called any Evils at all: but if they could, it is as evident from thence, that there are many which even infinite power cannot prevent; it being ſufficiently demonſtrable, that to produce a ſyſtem of created Beings, all ſupreme in happineſs and dignity, a government compoſed of all Kings, an army of all Generals, or a univerſe of all Gods, muſt be impracticable for Omnipotence itſelf.

WE have here then made a large ſtride towards our intended Goal, having at once acquitted the Divine Goodneſs, and freed Mankind from a numerous train of imaginary Evils, by moſt clearly ſhewing them to be no Evils at all; and yet under this head are really comprehended all the Evils we perpetually complain of, except actual pain, the nature of which, and how it came to have a place in the works of an omnipotent and good Being, ſhall be conſidered in the next Letter from,

SIR, &c.

LET-

LETTER III.

ON

NATURAL EVILS.

LETTER III.

On Natural Evils.

SIR,

I Shall now lay before you my free ſentiments concerning the Origin of Natural Evils, by which I underſtand the ſufferings of ſenſitive Beings only; for tempeſts, inundations and earthquakes, with all the diſorders of the material World, are no farther Evils than as they affect the ſenſitive: ſo that under this head can be only comprehended pains of body, and inquietudes of mind. That theſe are real Evils, I readily acknowledge; and if any one is philoſopher enough to doubt of it, I ſhall only beg leave to refer him to a ſevere fit of ſickneſs, or a tedious law-ſuit, for farther ſatisfaction.

The production of Happineſs ſeems to be the only motive that could induce infinite Goodneſs to

to exert infinite Power to create all things: for, to ſay truth, Happineſs is the only thing of real value in exiſtence; neither riches, nor power, nor wiſdom, nor learning, nor ſtrength, nor beauty, nor virtue, nor religion, nor even life itſelf, being of any importance but as they contribute to its production. All theſe are in themſelves neither Good nor Evil; Happineſs alone is their great end, and they deſirable only as they tend to promote it. Moſt aſtoniſhing therefore it muſt appear to every one who looks round him, to obſerve all creatures bleſſed with life and ſenſation, that is, all creatures made capable of Happineſs, at the ſame time by their own natures condemned to innumerable and unavoidable miſeries. Whence can it proceed, that Providence ſhould thus ſeem to counteract his own benevolent intentions? To what ſtrange and inviſible cauſe are all theſe numerous and invincible Evils indebted for their Exiſtence? If God is a good and benevolent Being, what end could he propoſe from creation, but the propagation of Happineſs? and if Happineſs is the end of all exiſtence, why are not all creatures that do exiſt happy?

The true ſolution of this important queſtion, ſo long and ſo vainly ſearched for by the philoſophers of all ages and all countries, I take to be at laſt no more than this, That theſe real Evils proceed from the ſame ſource as thoſe imaginary ones of

of Imperfection before treated of, namely, from that ſubordination, without which no created ſyſtem can ſubſiſt; all ſubordination implying imperfection, all Imperfection Evil, and all Evil ſome kind of inconvenience or ſuffering; ſo that there muſt be particular inconveniences and ſufferings, annexed to every particular rank of created Beings by the circumſtances of things, and their modes of exiſtence. Moſt of thoſe to which we ourſelves are liable may be eaſily ſhewn to be of this kind, the effects only of human nature, and the ſtation Man occupies in the univerſe: and therefore their Origin is plainly deducible from neceſſity; that is, they could not have been prevented without the loſs of greater good, or the admiſſion of greater Evils than themſelves; or by not creating any ſuch creatures as Men at all. And tho' this upon a general view of things, does not ſo forcibly ſtrike us; yet, on a more minute inſpection into every grievance attendant on human nature, it will moſt evidently appear. Moſt of theſe, I think, may be comprehended under the following heads: poverty, labour, inquietudes of mind, pains of body, and death; from none of which we may venture to affirm Man could ever have been exempted, ſo long as he continued to be Man. God indeed might have made us quite other creatures, and placed us in a world quite otherwiſe conſtituted; but then we had been no longer Men; and whatever Beings had occupied

our ſtations in the univerſal Syſtem, they muſt have been liable to the ſame inconveniences.

Poverty, for example, is what all could not poſſibly have been exempted from, not only by reaſon of the fluctuating nature of human poſſeſſions, but becauſe the world could not ſubſiſt without it; for had all been rich, none could have ſubmitted to the commands of another, or the drudgeries of life; thence all governments muſt have been diſſolved, arts neglected, and lands uncultivated, and ſo an univerſal penury have over-whelmed all, inſtead of now and then pinching a few. Hence, by the bye, appears the great excellence of Charity, by which Men are enabled by a particular diſtribution of the bleſſings and enjoyments of life, on proper occaſions, to prevent that poverty, which by a general one Omnipotence itſelf could never have prevented: ſo that, by inforcing this duty, God as it were demands our aſſiſtance to promote univerſal happineſs, and to ſhut out miſery at every door, where it ſtrives to intrude itſelf.

Labour indeed God might eaſily have excuſed us from, ſince at his command the Earth would readily have poured forth all her treaſures without our inconſiderable aſſiſtance: but if the ſevereſt Labour cannot ſufficiently ſubdue the malignity

of human nature, what plots and machinations, what wars, rapine, and devaſtation, what profligacy, and licentiouſneſs, muſt have been the conſequences of univerſal idleneſs! So that Labour ought only to be looked upon as a taſk kindly impoſed upon us by our indulgent Creator, neceſſary to preſerve our health, our ſafety, and our innocence.

Inquietudes of mind cannot be prevented without firſt eradicating all our inclinations and paſſions, the winds and tides that preſerve the great Ocean of human life from perpetual ſtagnation. So long as Men have purſuits, they muſt meet with diſappointments; and whilſt they have diſappointments, they muſt be diſquieted; whilſt they are injured, they muſt be enflamed with anger; and whilſt they ſee cruelties, they muſt be melted with pity; whilſt they perceive danger, they muſt be ſenſible of fear; and whilſt they behold Beauty, they muſt be inſlaved by Love: nor can they be exempted from the various anxieties attendant on theſe various and turbulent paſſions. Yet without them we ſhould be undoubtedly leſs happy and leſs ſafe; for without anger we ſhould not defend ourſelves, and without pity we ſhould not aſſiſt others: without fear we ſhould not preſerve our lives, and without love they would not be worth preſerving.

PAINS of body are perhaps but the neceſſary conſequences of the union of material and ſpiritual eſſences; for matter being by nature diviſible, when endued with ſenſibility, muſt probably be affected by pains and pleaſures by its different modifications: wherefore, to have been freed from our ſufferings, we muſt have been deprived of all our ſenſual enjoyments; a compoſition by which few ſurely would be gainers. Beſides, the pains of our bodies are neceſſary to make us continually mindful of their preſervation; for what numberleſs lives would be loſt in every trifling purſuit, or flung away in ill humour, was the piercing of a ſword no more painful than the tickling of a feather.

DEATH, the laſt and moſt dreadful of all Evils, is ſo far from being one, that it is the infallible cure for all others.

To die is landing on ſome ſilent ſhore,
Where billows never beat, nor tempeſts roar;
Ere well we feel the friendly ſtroke 'tis o'er.

GARTH.

For, abſtracted from the ſickneſs and ſufferings uſually attending it, it is no more than the expiration of that term of life, God was pleaſed to beſtow on us, without any claim or merit on our part.

part. But was it an Evil ever ſo great, it could not be remedied but by one much greater, which is by living for ever; by which means our wickedneſs, unreſtrained by the proſpect of a future ſtate, would grow ſo inſupportable, our ſufferings ſo intolerable by perſeverance, and our pleaſures ſo tireſome by repetition, that no Being in the Univerſe could be ſo compleatly miſerable as a ſpecies of immortal Men. We have no reaſon therefore to look upon death as an Evil, or to fear it as a puniſhment, even without any ſuppoſition of a future life: but if we conſider it as a paſſage to a more perfect ſtate, or a remove only in an eternal ſucceſſion of ſtill improving ſtates (for which we have the ſtrongeſt reaſons) it will then appear a new favour from the divine munificence; and a man muſt be as abſurd to repine at dying, as a traveller would be, who propoſed to himſelf a delightful tour thro' various unknown countries, to lament that he cannot take up his reſidence at the firſt dirty Inn which he baits at on the road. The inſtability of human life, or the haſty changes of its ſucceſſive periods, of which we ſo frequently complain, are no more than the neceſſary progreſs of it to this neceſſary concluſion; and are ſo far from being Evils deſerving theſe complaints, that they are the ſource of our greateſt pleaſures, as they are the ſource of all novelty, from which our greateſt pleaſures are ever derived. The continual ſucceſſion of Sea-

ſons in the human life, by daily preſenting to us new ſcenes, render it agreeable, and, like thoſe of the year, afford us delights by their change, which the choiceſt of them could not give us by their continuance. In the Spring of Life, the gilding of the ſun-ſhine, the verdure of the fields, and the variegated paintings of the ſky, are ſo exquiſite in the Eyes of Infants at their firſt looking abroad into a new World, as nothing perhaps afterwards can equal. The heat and vigour of the ſucceeding Summer of Youth ripens for us new pleaſures, the blooming maid, the nightly revel, and the jovial chace. The ſerene Autumn of compleat Manhood feaſts us with the golden harveſts of our worldly purſuits: nor is the hoary Winter of old age deſtitute of its peculiar comforts and enjoyments, of which the recollection and relation of thoſe paſt are perhaps none of the leaſt; and at laſt Death opens to us a new proſpect, from whence we ſhall probably look back upon the diverſions and occupations of this world with the ſame contempt we do now on our Tops and Hobby-horſes, and with the ſame ſurpriſe, that they could ever ſo much entertain or engage us.

Thus we ſee all theſe Evils could never have been prevented even by infinite Power, without the introduction of greater, or the loſs of ſuperior good; they are but the neceſſary conſequences of human

human Nature; from which it can no more be diveſted, than matter from extenſion, or heat from motion, which proceed from the very modes of their exiſtence.

If it be objected, that, after all that has been ſaid, there are innumerable miſeries entailed upon all things that have life, and particularly on Man; many diſcaſes of the body, and afflictions of mind, in which Nature ſeems to play the Tyrant, ingenious in contriving torments for her children; that we cannot avoid ſeeing every moment with horror numbers of our fellow-creatures condemned to tedious and intolerable miſeries, ſome expiring on racks, others roaſting in flames, ſome ſtarving in dungeons, others raving in mad-houſes; ſome broiling in fevers, others groaning whole months under the exquiſite tortures of gout and ſtone: If it be ſaid further, that ſome men being exempted from many calamities with which others are afflicted, proves plainly that all might have been exempted from all; the charge can by no means be diſputed, nor can it be alledged that infinite Power could not have prevented moſt of theſe dreadful calamities. From hence therefore I am perſuaded, that there is ſomething in the abſtract nature of pain, conducive to pleaſure; that the ſufferings of individuals are abſolutely neceſſary to univerſal happineſs; and that, from connections to us inconceivable, it was impracticable for

Omnipotence to produce the one, without at the ſame time permitting the other. Their conſtant and uniform concomitancy thro' every part of Nature with which we are acquainted, very much corroborates this conjecture, in which ſcarce one inſtance, I believe, can be produced of the acquiſition of pleaſure or convenience by any creatures, which is not purchaſed by the previous or conſequential ſufferings of themſelves or others; pointing out, as it were, that a certain allay of pain muſt be caſt into the univerſal maſs of created Happineſs, and inflicted ſomewhere for the benefit of the whole. Over what mountains of ſlain is every mighty Empire rolled up to the ſummit of Proſperity and Luxury, and what new ſcenes of deſolation attend its fall? To what infinite toil of Men, and other animals, is every flouriſhing City indebted for all the conveniences and enjoyments of Life, and what vice and miſery do thoſe very enjoyments introduce? The pleaſures peculiar to the continuing our ſpecies are ſeverely paid for by pains and perils in one Sex, and by cares and anxieties in both. Thoſe annexed to the preſervation of ourſelves are both preceded and followed by numberleſs ſufferings; preceded by the maſſacres and tortures of various animals preparatory to a feaſt, and followed by as many diſeaſes lying in wait in every diſh to pour forth vengeance on their deſtroyers. Our riches and honours are acquired by laborious or perilous occupations, and

our

our ſports are purſued with ſcarce leſs fatigue or danger, and uſually attended with diſtreſſes and deſtruction of innocent animals. This univerſal connection of pain with pleaſure ſeems, I think, ſtrongly to intimate, that pain abſtractedly conſidered muſt have its uſes; and ſince we may be aſſured, that it is never admitted but with the reluctance of the ſupreme Author, thoſe uſes muſt be of the higheſt importance, tho' we have no faculties to conceive them.

THE human mind can comprehend but a very ſmall part of the great and aſtoniſhing whole: for any thing we know, the ſufferings (and perhaps the crimes producing thoſe ſufferings) of the Inhabitants of this terreſtrial Globe may ſome way or other affect thoſe of the moſt diſtant planet, and the whole animal world may be connected by ſome principle as general as that of attraction in the corporeal, and ſo the miſeries of particular Beings be ſome way neceſſary to the happineſs of the whole. How theſe things operate, is indeed to us quite inconceivable; but that they do operate in ſome ſuch extenſive Manner is far, I think, from improbable.

ALL Ages and Nations ſeem to have had confuſed notions of the merits of ſufferings abſtracted from their tendency to any viſible good, and have paid the higheſt honours to thoſe who have voluntarily

naturally endured them, as to their common benefactors. Many in Christian countries have formerly been famed for long fasting, for whipping or torturing themselves, for sitting whole years in uneasy postures, or exposing themselves to the inclemency of the weather on the tops of pillars. Many at this day in the East are almost deified for loading themselves with heavy chains, bending under burthens, or confining themselves in chairs stuck round with pointed nails. Now, if these notions are not totally devoid of all reason and common sense, (and few, I believe, are so which become universal) they can be founded on no other principle than this, of the necessity of pain to produce happiness, which seems another weighty instance of the probability of this ancient and universal opinion, tho' the reasons for it are forgot or unknown, and the practices derived from it big with the most absurd and ridiculous superstitions.

[illegible] from which many of our [illegible] may be derived, may be discovered [illegible] that is, by assimi- [illegible] which are not objects of our [illegible] within their [illegible] vast Chain, de- [illegible] from infinite per- [illegible] As there are many [illegible] there be many more above

above him. If we look downwards, we ſee innumerable ſpecies of inferior Beings, whoſe happineſs and lives are dependent on his will; we ſee him cloathed by their ſpoils, and fed by their miſeries and deſtruction, inſlaving ſome, tormenting others, and murdering millions for his luxury or diverſion; is it not therefore analogous and highly probable, that the happineſs and life of Man ſhould be equally dependent on the wills of his ſuperiors? As we receive great part of our pleaſures, and even ſubſiſtence, from the ſufferings and deaths of lower animals, may not theſe ſuperior Beings do the ſame from ours, and that by ways as far above the reach of the moſt exalted human underſtandings, as the means by which we receive our benefits, are above the capacities of the meaneſt creatures deſtined for our ſervice? The fundamental Error in all our reaſonings on this ſubject, is that of placing ourſelves wrong in that preſumptuous climax of Beaſt, Man, and God; from whence, as we ſuppoſe falſely, that there is nothing above us except the Supreme Being, we fooliſhly conclude that all the Evils we labour under muſt be derived immediately from his omnipotent hand: whereas there may be numberleſs intermediate Beings, who have power to deceive, torment, or deſtroy us, for the ends only of their own pleaſure or utility, who may be veſted with the ſame privileges over their inferiors, and as much benefited by the uſe of them,

them, as ourſelves. In what manner theſe benefits accrue to them, it is impoſſible for us to conceive; but that impoſſibility leſſens not the probability of this conjecture, which by Analogy is ſo ſtrongly confirmed.

SHOULD you, Sir, have been lately employed in reading ſome of thoſe ſublime Authors, who, from pride and ignorance, delight to puff up the dignity of Human Nature, the notions here advanced may appear to you abſurd and incredible, becauſe inconſiſtent with that imaginary dignity; and you may object, that it is impoſſible that God ſhould ſuffer innocence to be thus afflicted, and reaſon thus deceived: that tho' he may permit animals made ſolely for the uſe of Man to be thus abuſed for his convenience or recreation; yet that Man himſelf, the ſole poſſeſſor of reaſon, the Lord of this terreſtrial globe, his own ambaſſador, vicegerent, and ſimilitude, ſhould be thus dependent on the will of others, muſt be utterly inconſiſtent with the divine Wiſdom and Juſtice. But pray, Sir, what does all this prove, but the importance of a Man to himſelf? Is not the juſtice of God as much concerned to preſerve the happineſs of the meaneſt Inſect which he has called into being, as of the greateſt Man that ever lived? Are not all creatures we ſee made ſubſervient to each others uſes? and what is there in Man, that he only ſhould be exempted from this

common fate of all created Beings? The ſuperiority of Man to that of other terreſtrial animals is as inconſiderable, in proportion to the immenſe plan of univerſal Exiſtence, as the difference of climate between the north and ſouth end of the paper I now write upon, with regard to the heat and diſtance of the Sun. There is nothing leads us into ſo many Errors concerning the works and deſigns of Providence, as that fooliſh vanity that can perſuade ſuch inſignificant creatures that all things were made for their ſervice; from whence they ridiculouſly ſet up Utility to themſelves as the ſtandard of Good, and conclude every thing to be Evil which appears injurious to them or their purpoſes. As well might a neſt of Ants imagine this Globe of Earth created only for them to caſt up into hillocks, and cloathed with grain and herbage for their ſuſtenance; then accuſe their Creator for permitting ſpades to deſtroy them, and plows to lay waſte their habitations; the inconveniences of which they feel, but are utterly unable to comprehend their uſes, as well as the relations they themſelves bear to ſuperior Beings.

It is ſurpriſing that none of thoſe Philoſophers, who were drove to the ſuppoſition of two Firſt Cauſes, and many other abſurdities, to account for the Origin of Evil, ſhould not rather have choſen to impute it to the miniſtration of intermediate

vient to happineſs, or otherwiſe infinite Power, joined with infinite Goodneſs, would have prevented both vice and puniſhment.

For this reaſon, amongſt all the ſhort-ſighted conjectures of Man into the diſpenſations of Providence and a future State, the ancient doctrine of Tranſmigration ſeems the moſt rational and moſt conſiſtent with his wiſdom and goodneſs; as by it all the unequal diſpenſations of things ſo neceſſary in one Life, may be ſet right in another, and all creatures ſerve the higheſt and loweſt, the moſt eligible and moſt burthenſome offices of life by an equitable kind of rotation; by which means their rewards and puniſhments may not only be well proportioned to their behaviour, but alſo ſubſervient towards carrying on the Buſineſs of the Univerſe, and thus at the ſame time anſwer the purpoſes of both juſtice and utility. But the pride of man will not ſuffer us to treat this ſubject with the ſeriouſneſs it deſerves; but rejects as both impious and ridiculous every ſuppoſition of inferior creatures ever arriving at its own imaginary dignity, allowing at the ſame time the probability of human Nature being exalted to the angelic, a much wider and more extraordinary tranſition, but yet ſuch a one as may probably be the natural conſequence, as well as the reward of a virtuous life: nor is it leſs likely that our vices may debaſe us to the ſervile condition of inferior animals,

in

in whoſe forms we may be ſeverely puniſhed for the injuries we have done to Mankind when amongſt them, and be obliged in ſome meaſure to repair them, by performing the drudgeries tyrannically impoſed upon us for their ſervice.

FROM what has been ſaid, I think, it plainly appears that numberleſs Evils do actually exiſt, which could not have been excluded from the works of infinite goodneſs even by infinite power; and from hence it may be concluded, that there are none which could; but that God has exerted all his omnipotence to introduce all poſſible happineſs, and, as far as the imperfection of created things would permit, to exclude all miſery, that is, all natural Evil, from the univerſal ſyſtem; which notwithſtanding will introduce itſelf in many circumſtances, even in oppoſition to infinite Power.

THE Origin of Moral Evil lies much deeper, and I will venture to aſſert has never yet been fathomed by the ſhort line of human underſtanding. That I ſhall be able to reach it, I have by no means the vanity to imagine: but, laying aſide all pre-conceived opinions and ſyſtematical prejudice, I will in my next endeavour to come as near it as lies in the power of,

SIR, &c.

LETTER IV.

ON

MORAL EVIL.

LETTER IV.

On MORAL EVIL.

SIR,

I Muſt now leave that plain and eaſy road thro' which I have hitherto conducted you, and carry you thro' unfrequented paths, and ways untrodden by philoſophic feet. Already, I think, the exiſtence of Natural Evil has been ſufficiently accounted for, without any derogation from the power, wiſdom, or goodneſs of God. What next remains to be cleared up, is the Origin of Moral Evil; which, conſiſtently with the ſame Divine Attributes, I have never ſeen accounted for by any Author ancient or modern, in a manner that could give tolerable ſatisfaction to a rational Inquirer. Nor indeed can this be ever effectually performed, without at the ſame time taking into conſideration all thoſe moſt abſtruſe ſpeculations

concerning the nature of Virtue, Free-will, Fate, Grace, and Predeſtination, the debates of ages, and matter of innumerable folio's. To attempt this, therefore, in the compaſs of a Letter would be the higheſt preſumption, did not I well know the clear and ready comprehenſion of the perſon to whom it is addreſſed; and alſo, that the moſt difficult of theſe kinds of diſquiſitions are uſually better explained in a few lines, than by a thouſand pages.

In order therefore to find out the true Origin of Moral Evil, it will be neceſſary, in the firſt place, to inquire into its nature and eſſence; or what it is that conſtitutes one action Evil, and another Good. Various have been the opinions of various Authors on this Criterion of Virtue; and this variety has rendered that doubtful, which muſt otherwiſe have been clear and manifeſt to the meaneſt capacity. Some indeed have denied that there is any ſuch thing, becauſe different ages and nations have entertained different ſentiments concerning it: but this is juſt as reaſonable as to aſſert, that there are neither Sun, Moon, nor Stars, becauſe Aſtronomers have ſupported different ſyſtems of the motions and magnitudes of theſe celeſtial bodies. Some have placed it in conformity to truth, ſome to the fitneſs of things, and others to the will of God. But all this is merely ſuperficial: they reſolve us not why truth,

or

on the fitneſs of things, are either eligible or obligatory, or why God ſhould require us to act in one manner rather than another. The true reaſon of which can poſſibly be no other than this, becauſe ſome actions produce happineſs, and others miſery; ſo that all Moral Good and Evil are nothing more than the production of Natural. This alone it is that makes truth preferable to falſhood, this that determines the fitneſs of things, and this that induces God to command ſome actions and forbid others. They who extol the truth, beauty, and harmony of Virtue, excluſive of its conſequences, deal but in pompous nonſenſe; and they who would perſuade us, that Good and Evil are things indifferent, depending wholly on the will of God, do but confound the nature of things, as well as all our notions of God himſelf, by repreſenting him capable of willing contradictions; that is, that we ſhould be, and be happy, and at the ſame time that we ſhould torment and deſtroy each other; for injuries cannot be made benefits, pain cannot be made pleaſure, and conſequently vice cannot be made virtue by any power whatever. It is the conſequences therefore of all human actions that muſt ſtamp their value. So far as the general practice of any action tends to produce Good, and introduce happineſs into the world, ſo far we may pronounce it virtuous; ſo much Evil as it occaſions, ſuch is the degree of vice it contains. I ſay the

general practice, because we must always remember in judging by this rule, to apply it only to the general species of actions, and not to particular actions; for the infinite wisdom of God, desirous to set bounds to the destructive consequences which must otherwise have followed from the universal depravity of mankind, has so wonderfully contrived the nature of things, that our most vitious actions may sometimes accidentally and collaterally produce Good. Thus, for instance, robbery may disperse useless hoards to the benefit of the public; Adultery may bring heirs, and good humour too, into many families, where they would otherwise have been wanting; and Murder free the world from tyrants and oppressors. Luxury maintains its thousands, and Vanity its ten thousands. Superstition and Arbitrary Power contribute to the grandeur of many nations, and the liberties of others are preserved by the perpetual contentions of avarice, knavery, selfishness, and ambition; and thus the worst of vices, and the worst of Men, are often compelled by Providence to serve the most beneficial purposes, contrary to their own malevolent tendencies and inclinations; and thus private vices become public benefits by the force only of accidental circumstances. But this impeaches not the truth of the Criterion of Virtue before mentioned, the only solid foundation on which any true system of ethicks can be built, the only plain, simple, and uniform rule by which we can pass any judgment

ment on our actions; but by this we may be enabled, not only to determine which are good, and which are evil, but almoſt mathematically to demonſtrate the proportion of Virtue or Vice which belongs to each, by comparing them with the degrees of happineſs or miſery which they occaſion. But tho' the production of happineſs is the Eſſence of virtue, it is by no means the End: the great End is the probation of Mankind, or the giving them an opportunity of exalting or degrading themſelves in another ſtate by their behaviour in the preſent. And thus indeed it anſwers two moſt important purpoſes; thoſe are, the conſervation of our happineſs, and the teſt of our obedience: for had not ſuch a teſt ſeemed neceſſary to God's infinite wiſdom, and productive of univerſal Good, he would never have permitted the happineſs of Men, even in this life, to have depended on ſo precarious a tenure, as their mutual good behaviour to each other. For it is obſervable, that he who beſt knows our formation, has truſted no one thing of importance to our reaſon or virtue: he truſts only to our appetites for the ſupport of the individual, and the continuance of our ſpecies; to our vanity, or compaſſion, for our bounty to others; and to our fears, for the preſervation of ourſelves; often to our vices for the ſupport of Government, and ſometimes to our follies for the preſervation of our Religion. But ſince ſome teſt of our obe-

dience

dience was neceſſary, nothing ſure could have been commanded for that end ſo fit and proper, and at the ſame time ſo uſeful, as the practice of virtue; nothing have been ſo juſtly rewarded with happineſs, as the production of happineſs in conformity to the will of God. It is this conformity alone which adds merit to virtue, and conſtitutes the eſſential difference between Morality and Religion. Morality obliges Men to live honeſtly and ſoberly, becauſe ſuch behaviour is moſt conducive to public happineſs, and conſequently to their own; Religion, to purſue the ſame courſe, becauſe conformable to the will of their Creator. Morality induces them to embrace Virtue from prudential conſiderations; Religion, from thoſe of gratitude and obedience. Morality therefore, entirely abſtracted from Religion, can have nothing meritorious in it; it being but wiſdom, prudence, or good oeconomy, which, like health, beauty, or riches, are rather obligations conferred upon us by God, than merits in us towards him; for tho' we may be juſtly puniſhed for injuring ourſelves, we can claim no reward for ſelf-preſervation; as ſuicide deſerves puniſhment and infamy, but a Man deſerves no reward or honours for not being guilty of it. This I take to be the meaning of all thoſe paſſages in our Scriptures in which Works are repreſented to have no merit without Faith; that is, not without believing in hiſtorical facts, in creeds, and articles; but without

being

being done in purſuance of our belief in God, and in obedience to his commands *. And now, having mentioned Scripture, I cannot omit obſerving, that the Chriſtian is the only religious or moral Inſtitution in the world that ever ſet in a right light theſe two material points, the Eſſence, and the End of Virtue; that ever founded the one in the production of happineſs, that is, in univerſal benevolence, or, in their language, Charity to all Men; the other, in the probation of Man, and his obedience to his Creator. Sublime and magnificent as was the philoſophy of the Ancients, all their moral ſyſtems were deficient in theſe two important articles. They were all built on the ſandy foundations of the innate beauty of virtue,

* What was that Faith which the Author of the Chriſtian Religion indiſpenſably required in all his diſciples? It could not be a literal and implicit belief of the divine inſpiration of all the Books of the Old Teſtament; and conſequently of all the Hiſtory, Chronology, Geography, and Philoſophy contained in them; becauſe to theſe the Jews, who rejected it, adhered with the moſt ſuperſtitious exactneſs: it could not be the ſame kind of belief in the Writings of the New Teſtament, becauſe theſe in his Life-time had no exiſtence: much leſs could it conſiſt in a blind aſſent to the numberleſs explanations of theſe Books, and leaſt of all in the Belief of Creeds, Articles, and theological Syſtems founded on ſuch explanations; for all theſe were the productions of later Ages. It muſt therefore have been this, and this alone; a ſincere Belief in the divine Authority of his Miſſion, and a conſtant practice of all Moral Duties from a ſenſe of their being agreeable to his commands.

or

or enthuſiaſtic patriotiſm; and their great point in view was the contemptible reward of human glory; foundations which were by no means able to ſupport the magnificent ſtructures which they erected upon them; for the beauty of virtue, independent of its effects, is unmeaning nonſenſe; patriotiſm which injures mankind in general for the ſake of a particular country, is but a more extended ſelfiſhneſs, and really criminal; and all human glory but a mean and ridiculous deluſion. The whole affair then of Religion and Morality, the ſubject of ſo many thouſand volumes, is in ſhort no more than this: the Supreme Being, infinitely good, as well as powerful, deſirous to diffuſe happineſs by all poſſible means, has created innumerable ranks and orders of Beings, all ſubſervient to each other by proper ſubordination. One of theſe is occupied by Man, a creature endued with ſuch a certain degree of knowledge, reaſon, and free-will, as is ſuitable to his ſituation, and placed for a time on this globe as in a ſchool of probation and education. Here he has an opportunity given him of improving or debaſing his nature, in ſuch a manner as to render himſelf fit for a rank of higher perfection and happineſs, or to degrade himſelf to a ſtate of greater imperfection and miſery; neceſſary indeed towards carrying on the buſineſs of the Univerſe, but very grievous and burthenſome to thoſe individuals, who, by their own miſconduct, are obliged to

ſubmit to it. The teſt of this his behaviour, is doing good, that is, co-operating with his Creator, as far as his narrow ſphere of action will permit, in the production of happineſs. And thus the happineſs and miſery of a future ſtate will be the juſt reward or puniſhment of promoting or preventing happineſs in this. So artificially by this means is the nature of all human virtue and vice contrived, that their rewards and puniſhments are woven as it were into their very eſſence; their immediate effects give us a foretaſte of their future; and their fruits in the preſent life, are the proper ſamples of what they muſt unavoidably produce in another. We have Reaſon given us to diſtinguiſh theſe conſequences, and regulate our conduct; and leſt that ſhould neglect its poſt, Conſcience is alſo appointed as an inſtinctive kind of monitor, perpetually to remind us both of our intereſt and our duty.

When we conſider how wonderfully the practice of Virtue is thus inforced by our great Creator, and that all which he requires of us under that title is only to be happy, that is, to make each other ſo; and when at the ſame time we look round us, and ſee the whole race of mankind thro' every ſucceſſive generation tormenting, injuring, and deſtroying each other, and perpetually counteracting the gracious deſigns of their Maker, it is a moſt aſtoniſhing paradox how all this comes

to

to paſs; why God ſhould ſuffer himſelf to be thus defeated in his beſt purpoſes by creatures of his own making; or why Man ſhould be made with diſpoſitions to defeat them at the expence of his own preſent and future happineſs; why infinite Goodneſs ſhould form Creatures inclined to oppoſe its own benevolent deſigns, or why infinite Power ſhould thus ſuffer itſelf to be oppoſed.

THERE are ſome, I know, who extricate themſelves from this difficulty very concifely by aſſerting, that there is in fact no ſuch original depravity, no ſuch innate propenſity to vice in human nature; but as this aſſertion is directly contrary to the expreſs declaration of the Scriptures, to the opinion of the Philoſophers and Moraliſts of all ages, and to the moſt conſtant, and unvariable experience of every hour; I think they no more deſerve an anſwer, than they who would affirm, that a flame has no tendency to the center by its natural gravity, or that flame has no inclination to aſcend.

BUT the uſual ſolution applied to this difficulty by the ableſt Philoſophers and Divines, with which they themſelves, and moſt of their readers, ſeem perfectly ſatisfied, is comprehended in the following reaſoning: That Man came perfect out of the hands of his Creator, both in virtue and happineſs; but it being more eligible that he ſhould be a free agent than a mere machine, God endued him with Free-

dom of will; from the abuſe of which Freedom, all Miſery and Sin, that is, all Natural and Moral Evils, derive their exiſtence: from all ſuch therefore the Divine Goodneſs is ſufficiently juſtified, by reaſon they could not be prevented without the loſs of ſuperior Good, for to create Men free, and at the ſame time compel them to be virtuous, is utterly impoſſible.

But whatever air of demonſtration this argument may aſſume, by whatever fam'd Preachers it may have been uſed, or by whatever learned Audiences it may have been approved, I will venture to affirm, that it is falſe in all its Principles, and in its Concluſion alſo; and I think it may be clearly ſhewn, that God did not make Man abſolutely perfect, nor abſolutely free: nor, if he had, would this in the leaſt have juſtified the introduction of wickedneſs and miſery.

That Man came perfect, that is, endued with all poſſible perfections, out of the hands of his Creator, is evidently a falſe notion derived from the Philoſophers of the firſt ages, founded on their ignorance of the Origin of Evil, and inability to account for it on any other hypotheſis: they underſtood not that the univerſal Syſtem required Subordination, and conſequently comparative Imperfections; nor that in the Scale of Beings there muſt be ſomewhere ſuch a creature as Man with

all

all his infirmities about him: that the total removal of theſe would be altering his very nature; and that as ſoon as he became perfect he muſt ceaſe to be Man. The truth of this, I think, has been ſufficiently proved; and beſides, the very ſuppoſition of a Being originally perfect, and yet capable of rendering itſelf wicked and miſerable, is undoubtedly a Contradiction, that very power being the higheſt imperfection imaginable.

THAT God made Man perfectly free is no leſs falſe: Men have certainly ſuch a degree of Free-will as to make them accountable, and juſtly puniſhable for the abuſe of it; but abſolute and independent Free-will is what, I believe, no created Being can be poſſeſſed of. Our actions proceed from our Wills, but our Wills muſt be derived from the natural diſpoſitions implanted in us by the Author of our Being: wrong elections proceed from wrong apprehenſions, or unruly paſſions; and theſe from our original Frame or accidental Education: theſe muſt determine all our actions, for we have no power to act differently, theſe previous circumſtances continuing exactly the ſame. Had God thought proper to have made all Men with the ſame heads, and the ſame hearts, which he has given to the moſt virtuous of the ſpecies, they would all have excelled in the ſame virtues: or had the Bias implanted in Human Nature drawn as ſtrongly towards the good or

good ſide, as it now apparently does towards the bad, it would have operated as ſucceſsfully, and with as little infringement on human Liberty: Men, as well as all other animals, are exactly fitted for the purpoſes they are deſigned for; and have inclinations and diſpoſitions given them accordingly: He, who implanted patience in the lamb, obedience in the horſe, fidelity in the dog, and innocence in the dove, might as eaſily have inſpired the breaſt of Man with theſe and all other virtues; and then his actions would have certainly correſponded with his Formation: therefore, in the ſtrict philoſophical Senſe, we have certainly no Free-will; that is, none independent of our Frame, our Natures, and the Author of them.

But were both theſe propoſitions true, were Men originally created both perfect and free, yet this would by no means juſtify the introduction of moral Evil; becauſe, if his perfection was immediately to be deſtroyed by his Free-will, he might as well never have been poſſeſt of the one, and much better have been prevented from making uſe of the other: let us diſpute therefore as long as we pleaſe, it muſt eternally be the ſame thing, whether a Creator of infinite power and knowledge, created Beings originally wicked and miſerable, or gave them a power to make themſelves ſo, fore-knowing they would employ that power to their own deſtruction.

If moral Evil therefore cannot be derived from the Abuſe of Free-will in Man, from whence can we trace its origin? Can it proceed from a juſt, a wiſe, and a benevolent God? Can ſuch a God form Creatures with diſpoſitions to do Evil, and then puniſh them for acting in conformity to thoſe Evil diſpoſitions? Strange and aſtoniſhing indeed muſt this appear to us, who know ſo little of the univerſal Plan! but it is far, I think, from being irreconcilable with the juſtice of the Supreme diſpoſer of all things: for let us but once acknowledge the truth of our firſt great propoſition, (and moſt certainly true it is) that natural Evils exiſt from ſome neceſſity in the nature of things, which no power can diſpenſe with or prevent, the expedieney of moral Evil will perhaps follow on courſe: for if miſery could not be excluded from the works of a benevolent Creator by infinite power, theſe miſeries muſt be endured by ſome creatures or other for the good of the whole: and if there were none capable of wickedneſs, then they muſt fall to the ſhare of thoſe who are perfectly innocent. Here again we ſee our difficulties ariſe from our wrong notions of Omnipotence, and forgetting how many difficulties it has to contend with: in the preſent inſtance it is obliged either to afflict Innocence, or be the cauſe of Wickedneſs; it has plainly no other Option: what then could infinite Wiſdom, Juſtice, and Goodneſs do in this ſituation more conſiſtent

with

with itſelf, than to call into being Creatures formed with ſuch depravity, in their diſpoſitions, as to induce many of them to act in ſuch a manner as to render themſelves proper ſubjects for ſuch neceſſary ſufferings, and yet at the ſame time endued with ſuch a degree * of Reaſon and Free-will as to put it in the power of every individual to eſcape them by their good behaviour: ſuch a Creature is Man; ſo corrupt, baſe, cruel and wicked as to convert theſe unavoidable miſeries into juſt puniſhments, and at the ſame time ſo ſenſible of his own depravity and the fatal conſe-

* Some have aſſerted that there can be no degrees of Free-will, but that every Being muſt be abſolutely free, or poſſeſſed of no Freedom at all: and this ſeems to have been the principal error that has led thoſe who have ſupported both ſides of this Queſtion into ſo many abſurdities; as it well might, ſince they were both equally wrong in eſpouſing a propoſition, which contradicts both reaſon, and experience. Brutes have a certain degree of Free-will; elſe why do we correct them for their miſbehaviour, or why do they amend upon correction? Yet certainly they have not ſo great a degree, as ourſelves. A man raving mad is not, nor is conſidered as a Free-agent; a man leſs mad has a greater portion of Freedom; and a man not mad at all has the greateſt; but ſtill the degree of his Freedom muſt bear a proportion to the weakneſs of his underſtanding, and the ſtrength of his paſſions, and prejudices; all which are a perverſion of reaſon, and madneſs as far as they extend, and operate on Free-will in the very ſame manner: ſo that it is ſo far from being true, that all men are equally free, that probably there are no two men, who are poſſeſſed of exactly the ſame degree of Freedom.

quences of guilt, as to be well able to correct the one, and to avoid the other. Here we ſee a ſubſtantial Reaſon for the depravity of Man, and the admittance of Moral Evil in theſe circumſtances ſeems not only compatible with the juſtice of God, but one of the higheſt inſtances of his conſummate wiſdom in ordering and diſpoſing all things in the beſt manner their imperfect natures will admit.

I PRESUME not by what has been here ſaid, to determine on the councils of the Almighty, to triumph in the compleat diſcovery of the Origin of Moral Evil, or to aſſert that this is the certain, or ſole cauſe of its exiſtence; I propoſe it only, as a Gueſs concerning the reaſon of its admiſſion, more probable, and leſs derogatory from the divine wiſdom, and juſtice, than any, that has hitherto been offered for that purpoſe.

THERE is undoubtedly ſomething farther in the general Depravity of Mankind than we are aware of, and probably many great and wiſe ends are anſwered by it to us totally incomprehenſible. God, as has been ſhewn, would never have permitted the exiſtence of Natural Evil, but from the impoſſibility of preventing it without the loſs of ſuperior Good: and on the ſame principle the admiſſion of Moral Evil is equally conſiſtent

with the divine Goodneſs: and who is he ſo knowing in the whole ſtupendous ſyſtem of Nature as to aſſert, that the Wickedneſs of ſome Beings may not, by means unconceivable to us, be beneficial to innumerable unknown Orders of others? or that the Puniſhments of ſome may not contribute to the Felicity of numbers infinitely ſuperior?

To this purpoſe the learned Hugenius ſays with great ſagacity, *Præterea credibile eſt, ipſa illa animi vitia magnæ hominum parti, non ſine ſummo concilio data eſſe: Cum enim Dei providentiâ talis ſit Tellus, eſuſque incolæ, quales cernimus, abſurdum enim foret exiſtimare omnia hæc alia facta eſſe, quam ille voluerit, ſciveritque futura* [a].

But let us not forget that this neceſſity of Vice and Puniſhment, and its ſubſerviency to public Good, makes no alteration in their natures with regard to Man; for, tho' the wiſdom of God may extract from the wickedneſs of Men ſome remote benefits to the Univerſe; yet that alters not the caſe with regard to them, nor in the leaſt extenuates their Guilt. He has given them reaſon ſufficient to inform them, that their injuries to each other are diſpleaſing to him, and Free-will ſufficient to refrain from ſuch actions, and may

[a] Coſmotheoros, Lib. 1. p. 34.

therefore punish their diſobedience without any infringement of juſtice: he knows indeed, that though none are under any compulſion to do Evil, yet that they are all ſo framed, that many will certainly do it; and He knows alſo that incomprehenſible ſecret why it is neceſſary that many ſhould: but his knowledge having no relation to their determinations renders not their vices leſs criminal, nor the puniſhment of them leſs equitable: for, tho' with regard to God, Vice may be perhaps the conſequence of Miſery; that is, Men may be inclined to Vice in order to render them proper objects of ſuch a degree of Miſery as was unavoidably neceſſary, and previouſly determined for the ſake of public Good, yet, in regard to Man, Miſery is the conſequence of Vice; that is, all human Vices produce Miſery, and are juſtly puniſhed by its infliction.

If it be objected, that this makes God the Author of Sin, I anſwer, God is, and muſt be, the Author of every thing; and to ſay that any thing is, or happens, independent of the Firſt Cauſe, is to ſay that ſomething exiſts, or happens, without any Cauſe at all. God is the Author, if it may be ſo expreſſed, of all the Natural Evils in the Univerſe; that is, of the feweſt poſſible in the Nature of things; and why may he not be the Author of all Moral Evil in the ſame manner,

and

and on the ſame principle? If Natural Evil owes its exiſtence to neceſſity, why may not Moral? If Miſery brings with it its Utility, why may not Wickedneſs?

"If ſtorms and earthquakes break not Heav'n's deſign,
"Why then a Borgia or a Cataline!"

WHEREFORE it ought always to be conſidered, that, tho' Sin in Us, who ſee no farther than the Evils it produces, is Evil, and juſtly puniſhable; yet in God, who ſees the cauſes and connections of all things, and the neceſſity of its admiſſion, that admiſſion may be no Evil at all, and that neceſſity a ſufficient vindication of his Goodneſs.

BUT it may be alledged that this principle totally changes the Nature of Vice, deſtroys the Criterion before affixed to it, and encourages the univerſal practice of Wickedneſs: for if Moral Evil, and the puniſhment of it, are neceſſary towards promoting univerſal Good, then the more wicked men are, the more they promote that Good; and the more they co-operate with their Creator in compleating his great and benevolent plan of univerſal happineſs. But this reaſoning is extremely fallacious: becauſe no collateral, remote, unknown and undeſigned Good reſulting from Vice can alter the Nature of it, or diveſt it of criminality; and moreover if that Good ariſes

only from its punishment, so far is it from an encouragement to wickedness, that it proves only that the punishment of it is necessary, and unpreventable; nay in its nature incapable of remission, without a penal satisfaction from some Being or other; nor does its co-operation with the designs of Providence render it less criminal, or less worthy of his just indignation: all Histories are filled with instances of the wickedness of Men conspiring to bring about the Councils of the Almighty; such were the ambition and ferocity of the Romans, the obstinacy of the Jews, the cruelty of Herod, and the treachery of Judas; yet were these never esteemed for that reason meritorious, or innocent.

From this important proposition, that all Natural Evil derives its existence from necessity, and all Moral from expediency arising from that necessity; I say, from this important proposition, well considered and pursued, such new lights might be struck out as could not fail, if directed by the hands of Learning and Impartiality, to lead the human Mind thro' the unknown regions of speculation, and to produce the most surprising and useful discoveries in Ethics, Metaphysics, and in Christianity too: I add Christianity, because it is a Master-Key, which will, I am certain, at once unlock all the mysterious and perplexing doctrines of that amazing Institution, and explain fairly,

without

without the leaſt aſſiſtance from theological artifice, all thoſe abſtruſe ſpeculations of Original Sin, Grace, and Predeſtination, and vicarious puniſhments, which the moſt learned, for want of this clue, have never yet been able to make conſiſtent with Reaſon or Common-ſenſe.

In the firſt place, for inſtance, the Doctrine[a] of Original Sin is really nothing more than the very Syſtem here laid down, into which we have been led by cloſely purſuing Reaſon, and without which the Origin of Moral Evil cannot be accounted for on any principle whatever. Indeed, according to the common notions of the abſolute Omnipotence of God, and the abſolute Free-will in Man, it is moſt abſurd and impious, as it repreſents the Deity voluntarily bringing Men into Being with depraved Diſpoſitions, tending to no good purpoſes, and then arbitrarily puniſhing them for the ſins which they occaſion with torments which anſwer no ends, either of their reformation or utility to the Univerſe: but when we ſee, by the foregoing explanation, the difficulties with which Omnipotence was environed, and that it was obliged by the neceſſity of Natural

[a] Original Sin is a contradiction in terms; original ſignifying innate, and ſin the act of an accountable Being: by this expreſſion therefore of Original Sin cannot be meant original or innate Guilt, for that is abſolute nonſenſe, but only an original depravity, or an innate diſpoſition to Sin.

Evils

Evils to admit Moral, all these absurdities at once vanish, and the Original Depravity of Man appears fairly consistent with the Justice and even Goodness of his Creator.

THE Doctrines of Predestination and Grace as set forth in the Scriptures, on the most impartial Interpretation, I take to be these: that some Men come into the world with dispositions so extremely bad, that God foreknows that they will certainly be guilty of many crimes, and in consequence be punished for them; that to others He has given better dispositions, and moreover protects them from Vice by a powerful but invisible influence, in the language of those writings, called Grace: this Scheme has appeared to many so partial and unjust, that they have totally rejected it, and endeavoured, by forced interpretations, to explain it quite out of the Bible, in contradiction to all the sense of language, and the whole tenour of those writings: and indeed, on the old plan of God's absolute Omnipotence, uncontrouled by any previous necessity, in the nature of things, to admit both Natural and Moral Evil, it is highly derogatory from His wisdom and goodness; but, on the supposition of that previous Necessity, there appears nothing incredible in it, nor the least inconsistent with divine Justice; because if God was obliged by the nature of things, and for the good of the whole, to suffer some to be

wicked,

wicked, and consequently miserable, he certainly might protect others both from guilt and punishment. He in this light may be compared to the commander of a numerous army, who, tho' he is obliged to expose many to danger, and some to destruction, yet protects others with ramparts and covert-ways; but so long as he exercises this power for the good of the whole, these distinctions amongst individuals ought never to be imputed to Partiality or Injustice.

THE Doctrine[a] of Sacrifice, or Vicarious Punishment, is the most universal, and yet exclusive of this plan the most absurd, of all religious Tenets that ever entered into the Mind of Man; so absurd is it, that how it came to be so universal is not easy to be accounted for: Pagans, Jews, and Christians, have all agreed in this one point, tho' differing in all others; and have all treated it as a self-evident principle, that the Sins of one Creature might be atoned for by the Sufferings of another: but from whence they derived this strange opinion, none of them have pretended to give any account, or to produce in its defence the

[a] If the punishments of the wicked serve not some ends with which we are unacquainted, the sufferings of the innocent can possibly bear no manner of relation to them; and consequently the words Sacrifice, Atonement, Propitiation, and Vicarious Punishments can no more have any ideas affixed to them than the ringing of a bell, or the blowing of a trumpet, but are mere sounds, without any meaning at all.

leaſt ſhadow of a Reaſon; for that there ſhould be any manner of connection between the Miſeries of one Being and the Guilt of another; or that the puniſhing the Innocent, and excuſing the Guilty, ſhould be a mark of God's Deteſtation of Sin; or, that two acts of the higheſt Injuſtice ſhould make one of Juſtice, is ſo fundamentally wrong, ſo diametrically oppoſite to common-ſenſe, and all our ideas of juſtice, that it is equally aſtoniſhing that ſo many ſhould believe it themſelves or impoſe it upon others. But on the foregoing theory this alſo may be a little cleared up, and will by no means appear ſo very inconſiſtent with reaſon: for if a certain quantity of Miſery in ſome part of the Univerſal Syſtem is neceſſary to the Happineſs and Well-being of the Whole; and if this neceſſity ariſes from its anſwering ſome purpoſes incomprehenſible to the human Underſtanding; I will aſk any impartial Reaſoner, Why the Sufferings of one Being may not anſwer the ſame Ends, or be as effectual towards promoting Univerſal Good, as the Sufferings of another? If the Miſeries of Individuals are to be looked upon as taxes which they are obliged to pay towards the ſupport of the Public, why may not the Sufferings of one Creature ſerve the ſame purpoſes, or abſolve as much of that neceſſary tax, as the Sufferings of another, and on that account be accepted as a payment or ſatisfaction for their ſufferings; that is, for the Sufferings due to the Publick Utility from the

puniſh-

puniſhment of their crimes, without which the Happineſs of the whole could not ſubſiſt, unleſs they ſhould be replaced by the Sufferings of others? As we are entirely ignorant why miſery has any exiſtence at all, or what intereſt it ſerves in the general Syſtem of things, this may poſſibly be the caſe, for any thing we know; and that it is not, I am certain no one can affirm with Reaſon: Reaſon indeed cannot inform us that it is ſo, but that it may be, is undoubtedly no contradiction to Reaſon.

If I miſtake not, it might be ſhewn, that this principle of the neceſſity of Moral Evil, and its puniſhment, is the foundation on which the whole fabric of the Chriſtian Diſpenſation is erected; the principle itſelf is avowed by the Author of that Diſpenſation in clear, and expreſs words: *It muſt needs be*, ſays he, *that Offences come; but woe unto that Man by whom the Offence cometh.* That is, it is neceſſary towards compleating the deſigns of providence, that ſome Men ſhould commit crimes; but as no Individual is compelled by neceſſity to commit them, Woe unto all, who are thus guilty. He came, by his excellent precepts, and example, to diminiſh the quantity of Moral Evil in the World, and of Miſery conſequential from its puniſhment, but found it neceſſary to replace that Miſery in ſome degree by his own voluntary, and unmerited Sufferings: and perhaps

the

the unparalelled tortures inflicted on his diſciples and followers might be alſo neceſſary, and ſubſervient to the ſame purpoſes.

From what has been here ſaid, I think, it is evident that the Origin of Evil is by no means ſo difficult to account for as at firſt ſight it appears; for it has been plainly ſhewn that moſt of thoſe we uſually complain of are Evils of Imperfection, which are rather the abſence of comparative Advantages than poſitive Evils, and therefore, properly ſpeaking, no Evils at all; and as ſuch, ought to be intirely ſtruck out of the Catalogue. It has likewiſe been made appear, that of Natural Evils, which are the ſufferings of ſenſitive Beings, ſome are but the conſequences naturally reſulting from the particular circumſtances of particular ſituations in the ſcale of Exiſtence, which could not have been omitted without the deſtruction of the whole, and that many more are in all probability neceſſary by means to us incomprehenſible, to the production of Univerſal Good. Laſtly, it has been ſuggeſted, that from this neceſſity of Natural Evils, may ariſe the expediency of Moral, or even that thoſe neceſſary Sufferings muſt have been a ſacrifice inflicted on perfect innocence; and moreover, that it is probable Moral Evil, as well as Natural, may have ſome ultimate tendency to the advantage of the Whole; and that the crimes and miſdemeanours of ſome Beings may, by ſome means

means or other, totally beyond the reach of our narrow capacities, contribute to the Felicity of much greater Numbers.

THUS plan, Sir, I am perſuaded is not far diſtant from the Truth; and on this Foundation, if I miſtake not, a Syſtem of Morality and Religion, more compleat and ſolid, more conſiſtent with Reaſon, and with Chriſtianity too, might be erected than any which has yet appeared: I heartily wiſh that ſome perſon of more learning, abilities and leiſure than myſelf, (and much more, I am ſure, of all it would require) encouraged by your Favour, and aſſiſted by your Sagacity, would undertake it, and condeſcend to fill up theſe out-lines ſo inaccurately ſketched out by,

SIR, &c.

LET-

LETTER V.

ON

POLITICAL EVILS.

Y

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

A [illegible]
for [illegible]
(if you [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
for Our [illegible]
[illegible]
ture; [illegible]
[illegible]
Religion, [illegible]
dered of [illegible]
but only [illegible]
Universe, which [illegible]
ral and Moral [illegible]
Reason, to Religion, which are
indeed [illegible]

LETTER V.

On Political Evils.

SIR,

ACCORDING to my propoſed Plan there ſtill remain two ſorts of Evils to be accounted for, Political and Religious; under which heads, (if you are not already tired with ſo abſtruſe and unentertaining a correſpondence) I ſhall endeavour to ſhew you, that it is utterly impoſſible, even for Omnipotence itſelf, to give a perfect Government, or a perfect Religion to an imperfect Creature; and therefore, that the numberleſs imperfections inherent in all human Governments and Religions, are not imputable to God, nor any defect of power, wiſdom, or goodneſs in Him; but only to the inferiority of Man's ſtation in the Univerſe, which neceſſarily expoſes him to Natural and Moral Evils, and muſt, for the ſame Reaſon, to Political and Religious; which are

indeed but the Conſequences of the other. Superior Beings may probably form to themſelves, or receive from their Creator, Government without Tyranny or Corruption, and Religions without Deluſions or Abſurdities; but Man cannot: God indeed may remove him into ſo exalted a Society; but, whilſt he continues to be Man, he muſt be ſubject to innumerable Evils; amongſt which thoſe I call Political and Religious are far from being the leaſt.

But as theſe two kinds of Evils are very different, they will require different conſiderations; I ſhall therefore in the preſent confine myſelf to the Political only; by which I mean all thoſe grievous burthens of Tyranny and Oppreſſion, of Violence and Corruption, of War and Deſolation, under which all Ages and Nations have ever groaned on account of Government: little leſs deſtructive perhaps to the happineſs of Mankind, than even Anarchy itſelf; but which, notwithſtanding, are ſo woven into the very Eſſence of all Human Governments from the Depravity of Man, that without them none can be either eſtabliſhed, maintained or adminiſtered, nor conſequently can they be prevented without changing that Depravity into perfection; that is, without a compleat Alteration in Human Nature. How this comes to paſs may be eaſily explained by a ſhort examination firſt into the nature and origin of Government in general,

general, and afterwards into thoſe of particular Forms and Policies; than which nothing has been more commonly miſunderſtood and miſrepreſented.

As to Government in general, it is no wonder, that it is ſo productive of Evil, ſince its very Nature conſiſts of Power truſted in the hands of ſuch imperfect and vicious Creatures as Men, and exercised over others as imperfect and vicious as themſelves; in which there muſt be Pride, Avarice and Cruelty on one Side; Envy, Ignorance and Obſtinacy on the other; and Injuſtice and Self-Intereſt on both. Its Origin alſo ariſes from the ſame impure ſource of human Imperfection; that is, Men being neither wiſe nor honeſt enough, to purſue their common or mutual intereſts without Compulſion, are obliged to ſubmit to ſome, in order to ſecure their lives and properties from the depredations of all: but tho' this Neceſſity drives them into ſome kind of Government, yet it can never decide who ſhall govern, becauſe all Men being by nature equal, every one has an equal right to this ſuperiority: this therefore can be determined only by more Imperfections; that is, by the Struggles of Ambition, Treachery, Violence and Corruption; from ſucceſs in which univerſal ſcramble are derived all the mighty Empires of the Earth: One Man at firſt by ſome of theſe methods acquiring the command over a few, then by their aid extending his power over greater

numbers, and at laſt by the aſſiſtance of thoſe numbers, united by the advantage of plundering others, ſubduing all oppoſition: and thus we ſee all human Government is the Offspring of Violence and Corruption, and muſt inherit the imperfection of both its parents. It is plain alſo that national Governments can never be ſupported by any other methods than thoſe by which they were at firſt raiſed; for, being all independent of each other, and retaining ſtill their original inclination to devour each other; and having no ſuperior tribunal to refer to for juſtice, they can have no means to ſecure their own poſſeſſions, or to repel their mutual encroachments, but by force, which is called the Right of War; that is, the right of doing all the wrong that lies in their power: for war, however dignified with honours and encomiums by conquerors and their flatterers, is in fact nothing elſe but robbery and murder. Nations having no more right to plunder each other than Pariſhes, nor Men to kill one another in their political than in their private capacities.

If we look into the internal conſtitutions of all theſe Governments, we ſhall find likewiſe, that they muſt be adminiſtered by the ſame violence and corruption to which they are indebted for their Origin; that is, by hiring one part of the ſociety to force the other into ſubjection; and

that

that none of them ever ſubſiſted any longer than whilſt the ſtronger part, not always the moſt numerous, found it for their advantage to keep the weaker in obedience: for it ſhould be ever remembered, as the fundamental of all politics, that Men will never ſubmit to each other merely for the ſake of public Utility [a], too remote a benefit to make any impreſſion on the dull ſenſes of the multitude; but muſt be always beat or bribed into obedience. Higher orders of Beings may ſubmit to each other on nobler motives, from their ſenſe of Virtue or of univerſal Benefit; but Man can be governed by nothing but the Fear of Puniſhment or the hopes of Reward; that is, by Self-intereſt, the great Principle that operates in the political World in the ſame manner that Attraction does in the natural, preſerving order and reſtraining every thing to its proper courſe by the

[a] If any one is ſo ignorant of human nature, as to fancy that they will, let him make the experiment in a ſingle pariſh, and there, if without Power or Compulſion, Intereſt or Gratuity, ſolely by the ſtrength of Reaſon, and motives of public Advantage, he can perſuade the Inhabitants to ſubmit to equal and neceſſary taxes, to repair roads, build bridges, incloſe commons, drain marſhes, employ their poor, or perform any works of general Utility: if he can accompliſh this, let him retain his opinion; but if he finds it utterly impracticable, let him not expect, that it can ever be done in a whole Nation, in which there are ſo many more factions, intereſts and abſurdities to contend with.

continual endeavours of every individual to draw all power and property to himſelf*.

If we deſcend to the examination of particular forms of government, we ſhall ſee them all exactly correſpond with this general plan; we ſhall find that none of them owe their Origin to patriarchal power, the divine right of Princes, or the uninfluenced choice of the People; things which never exiſted but in the idle dreams of viſionary politicians; but all to the ſtruggles of Ambition and Self-Intereſt, ſubſiding at laſt into ſome kind of Policy; either into abſolute Monarchy, or ſome ſpecies of popular Government more or leſs remote from it, as the different parts of it have had Strength or Fortune to prevail; all which muſt be carried on by the ſame vitious methods of Violence or Corruption, and conſequently be productive of numberleſs, if not of equal, Evils.

In abſolute Monarchies, for inſtance, great violence muſt be exerciſed to keep men, by nature equal, in ſo unnatural a Subjection; this muſt produce plots, rebellions, civil wars, and maſſacres; and theſe muſt require more Violence to

* There is indeed one other method of Government frequently made uſe of by the moſt illuſtrious Princes and Legiſlators, that is Fraud: but, as this operates only by the appearance of Self-Intereſt, it may properly be comprehended under that head.

repreſs

repreſs them: but this Violence cannot be uſed without much Corruption; for it is not the perſon of the ſovereign, his crown and ſcepter, that can preſerve his authority, nor can he deſtroy thouſands with his own hand, like a Hero in a Romance; a powerful army muſt be kept in pay to enſlave the people, and a numerous clergy to deceive them *; whoſe ambition, avarice, luxury and cruelty muſt be ſatiated with the blood and treaſures of that very People as a reward for their ſervices: hence infinite Evils muſt ariſe, the lives, liberties and properties of all muſt be dependent on the capricious will of One, or, what is worſe, on the wills of his pimps, flatterers and favourites: juſtice muſt be perverted by favour, and that favour can ſeldom be obtained but by adulation, ſervility and treachery; this produces all kinds of Moral Evils, and theſe beget more Political.

In Democratical Governments, if there is leſs Violence there is more Corruption; which in theſe indeed is the Baſis of all Power, and productive of the moſt miſchievous effects; here all things

* It has been repreſented as if the Author by this deſigned to inſinuate, that the whole buſineſs of the Clergy was to deceive the people; than which nothing can be more diſtant from his intentions: all that he means is, that Men will not eaſily ſubmit to Tyranny unleſs their conſciences are firſt inſlaved; or that Popery is the moſt effectual ſupport of arbitrary power; a propoſition which he ſuppoſes no one will preſume to contradict.

are

are at the diſpoſal of an ignorant and giddy Multitude, always led to their own deſtruction by the flimſy eloquence and pretended patriotiſm of Knaves, Fools, and enthuſiaſtic Madmen; or commonly of ſome extraordinary Genius, formed for popularity by a lucky compoſition of all theſe excellent ingredients; all ſubordination is ſubverted; and the moſt inſolent and vitious of the people muſt be careſſed, bribed and intoxicated, and by that means rendered ſtill more inſolent and vitious; and all who by theſe methods acquire their favour, muſt be no leſs vitious than themſelves. If in Deſpotic Governments Power cannot be attained but by Servility and Adulation, in Democratical it can never be acquired but by the more pernicious Vices of Turbulence and Faction; for which reaſon theſe are ever ſure to be governed by the moſt wicked, ambitious, avaricious and miſchievous of their Members.

Mixed Governments, tho' perhaps productive of fewer Evils than either of the former, yet muſt neceſſarily partake of thoſe belonging to both, and be ſupported by more or leſs of Violence, as they more or leſs approach the Deſpotic; or of Corruption, as they come nearer to the Democratical Principles: the further they ſhrink from the iron ſcourges of the one, the more will they be entangled in the golden fetters of the other; for Corruption muſt always increaſe in due proportion

to the decreaſe of arbitrary Power, ſince where there is leſs Power to command obedience, there muſt be more bribery to purchaſe it, or there can be no Government at all. Theſe have beſides many Evils peculiar to themſelves, the very excellence of theſe ſort of Conſtitutions being productive of inconveniences: for this excellence conſiſting principally in this, that their different parts are able to counteract each others miſchievous intentions, the reins of Government are kept right only by each pulling a different way, and they ſubſiſt by a perpetual contention, like a body kept alive by the oppoſite effects of contrary poiſons: a very precarious and uneaſy kind of exiſtence! This expoſes them in ſome meaſure to all the Evils incident to both abſolute and popular Governments, tho' in a leſs degree: to the oppreſſion of the one, and the licentiouſneſs of the other, to factions at home, weakneſs abroad, and infinite expence in all parts of their adminiſtration: yet are theſe mixed conſtitutions the very beſt that human wiſdom could ever diſcover for the regulation of human Societies.

[10] All theſe Evils ariſe from the nature of Things and the nature of Man, and not from the Weakneſs or Wickedneſs of particular Men, or their accidental aſcendency in particular Governments: the degrees of them may indeed be owing to theſe, but their exiſtence is immutable. So long as the Imper-

Imperfection of human nature continues, ſo long will Princes, for the moſt part, convert that power with which they are truſted for the ſake of public Utility, to the ignoble ends of their own avarice, luxury or ambition; ſo long will the people prefer preſent Self-intereſt to remote benefits ariſing from national proſperity; and ſo long will corrupt miniſters employ this popular venality to their own private advantage; and how many ſoever are lopt off,

Non deficit aureus alter.

It is the miſapprehenſion of this, that is the fundamental error of all ignorant, but well-meaning, ſpeculative politicians [a], of all others the moſt untractable in government, and miſchievous in buſineſs, the engines with which knaves work,

[a] It is a ſtrange, but a certain Truth, that in politics moſt principles ſpeculatively right are practically wrong: to give a few inſtances of this kind out of many commonly adopted: viz. that thoſe who are poſſeſt of moſt property will fight beſt in its defence: that national buſineſs is moſt ſucceſsfully carried on by aſſemblies of Men uninfluenced and unconnected: that unbounded Liberty, civil and eccleſiaſtical, is moſt conducive to public happineſs and virtue; all theſe propoſitions have reaſon on their ſide, but experience againſt them: they all captivate vulgar minds, becauſe they look like truth, and they look like truth, becauſe they would be true if mankind in general acted upon honeſt or even upon rational principles; but as in fact they do neither, they are utterly falſe, and all political ſtructures built on ſuch unſtable foundations will inevitably fall to the ground.

and the ladders on which they mount to preferment: who endeavour to deſtroy all governments, becauſe they are not perfect; and oppoſe all adminiſtrations, becauſe they cannot govern men by ſuch means as they are not deſigned, or formed to be governed by: who, by a Syſiphæan kind of politics, are ever labouring to roll up a ſtone, that muſt recoil upon them; and to render that faultleſs, which infinite power and wiſdom cannot exempt from inconveniences, abuſes, and imperfections.

Should one enumerate all of this kind, which cannot be excluded from Government without the total alteration of human nature, they would be endleſs; to inſtance but a few: all political bodies, like the natural, muſt have the ſeeds of their own diſſolution ſown in their very eſſence, and like them be deſtroyed by every exceſs; by exceſs of poverty or riches, of ſlavery or liberty, of ignorance or knowledge, of adverſity or proſperity; a ſtrong proof of their imperfection, that they cannot bear exceſs even of the greateſt good; and yet they cannot be formed of more durable materials, ſo long as they are conſtituted of human creatures. All power truſted in the hands of ſo imperfect a creature as Man, muſt be pernicious, and oppreſſive, and yet ſomewhere ſuch power muſt be truſted. All human Laws muſt be liable to miſconſtruction, and uncertainty, yet without

Laws

Laws property cannot be ſecured. All popular Elections muſt be attended with corruption, licentiouſneſs, and the perverſion of juſtice, yet without them the liberty of no country can be preſerved. All national proviſions for the poor muſt not only be encouragements to idleneſs, but productive of conteſts, and oftentimes of cruelty, yet without ſuch many honeſt but unfortunate people muſt inevitably periſh. All religious teſts, and ſubſcriptions, are in their own natures ſubverſive of truth and morals; yet the folly of one part of mankind, and the knavery of the other, will ſcarcely permit any Government to ſubſiſt without them. Trade and wealth are the ſtrength and the purſuit of every wiſe nation, yet theſe muſt certainly produce Luxury, which no leſs certainly muſt produce their deſtruction. All War is a complication of all manner of Evils natural and moral, that is, of miſery and wickedneſs; yet without it national contentions can never be determined. No Government can be carried on, nor ſubordination preſerved, without forms, and ceremonials, pomps and parade; yet all ſuch, from the inferiority of human nature giving itſelf airs of grandeur and magnificence, and the deſpicable expedients it is obliged to have recourſe to ſupport it, muſt always have ſomething mean and ridiculous in them to exalted underſtandings. All Governments are in a great meaſure upheld by abſurd notions infuſed into the minds of the people, of the divine

right of ſome particular perſon or family to reign over them; a foolish partiality for ſome particular ſpot of ground; an outrageous zeal for ſome religion which they cannot underſtand, or a ſenſeleſs purſuit of glory which they can never attain: theſe are all falſe principles; yet without them, or ſome like them, no nation can long ſubſiſt: they can never be defended by reaſon, yet reaſon can produce no others that can ſupply their places. Every flouriſhing nation endeavours to improve Arts, and cultivate Reaſon and Good Senſe; yet, if theſe are extended too far, or too univerſally diffuſed, no national Government or national Religion can long ſtand their ground; for it is with old Eſtabliſhments as with old Houſes, their deformities are commonly their ſupports, and theſe can never be removed without endangering the whole fabric. In ſhort, no Government can be adminiſtered without in ſome degree deceiving the people, oppreſſing the mean, indulging the great, corrupting the venal, oppoſing factions to each other, and temporiſing with parties.

It is this neceſſity for Evil in all Governments, which gives that weight and popularity, which uſually attends all thoſe who oppoſe, and calumniate any Government whatever; appearing always to have reaſon on their ſide, becauſe the Evils of all power are conſpicuous to the meaneſt capacity; whereas the neceſſity for thoſe Evils are perceivable

only

only to ſuperior underſtandings. Every one can feel the burthen of taxes, and ſee the inconveniences of armies, places, and penſions, that muſt encreaſe them, but very few are able to comprehend that no Government can be ſupported without them in a certain degree; and that the more liberty any nation enjoys, the greater muſt be their number, and neceſſity. The moſt ignorant can perceive the miſchiefs that muſt ariſe from corrupt Miniſters and venal Parliaments; but it requires ſome ſagacity to diſcern, that aſſemblies of men unconnected by ſelf-intereſt, will no more draw together in the buſineſs of the public, than horſes without harneſs or bridles; but like them, inſtead of being quietly guided in the right road of general utility, will immediately run riot, ſtop the wheels of government, and tear all the political machine to pieces.

From hence it comes to paſs that all ignorant wrongheaded people naturally run into oppoſition and faction, whilſt the wiſe man knows that theſe Evils cannot be eradicated, and that their exceſs only can be prevented; that thus far every honeſt man will endeavour to his utmoſt, but to proceed farther only fools will hope for, or knaves pretend. He knows that numbers of men muſt always act in the ſame manner, if in the ſame circumſtances; that Politics are a Science as reducible to certainty as Mathematicks, and in them effects as invariably follow

follow their cauſes: that the operations of Will are as uniform, as thoſe of matter and motion; and that tho' the actions of individuals are contingencies, thoſe of numbers are conſtant, and invariable: that, tho' a ſingle man may poſſibly prefer public utility to private advantage, it is utterly impoſſible, that the majority of numerous bodies ſhould be actuated by the ſame generous, and patriotic principles *; theſe can ſpring only from Virtue and Wiſdom, benevolent hearts, and comprehenſive underſtandings; which, being the portion but of a few more exalted individuals, can never be found in the multitude to be governed: nor can they be beſtowed in any extraordinary degree on thoſe who govern, who would thereby be rendered unfit for their occupations: Stateſmen and Miniſters, who muſt be hackney'd in the

* This may be demonſtrated by a familiar inſtance: It is by no means uncommon for a ſingle Die to come up a Six, altho' the odds againſt it are five to one, but that a Majority of five hundred Dice ſhould at the ſame time come up Six's is ſcarcely within the power of Fortune; becauſe the Odds againſt each individual become almoſt infinite when operating upon the whole five hundred together. For the ſame reaſon, ſuppoſing every Sixth Man to be wiſe, honeſt, and public-ſpirited, which ſurely in any country is a very liberal allowance, there would not be the ſmalleſt probability that the Majority of any five hundred to be choſen out of the whole, would be of that ſort, tho' elected with the utmoſt impartiality; but, if ambition, ſelf-intereſt, and corruption interfere in the choice, as they moſt infallibly will, theſe will render it totally impoſſible,

in the ways of men, cannot be made of ſuch pure and refined materials; peculiar muſt be the compoſition of that little creature called a *Great Man*. He muſt be formed of all kinds of contradictions: he muſt be indefatigable in buſineſs, to fit him for the labours of his ſtation, and at the ſame time fond of pleaſures, to enable him to attach many to his intereſts, by a participation of their vices: He muſt be maſter of much artifice and knavery, his ſituation requiring him to employ, and be employed by, ſo many knaves; yet he muſt have ſome honeſty, or thoſe very knaves will be unwilling to truſt him: He muſt be poſſeſſed of great magnanimity perpetually to confront ſurrounding enemies, and impending dangers; yet of great meanneſs, to flatter thoſe enemies, and ſuffer tamely continual injuries, and abuſes: He muſt be wiſe enough to conduct the great affairs of Mankind with ſagacity and ſucceſs, and to acquire riches and honours for his reward; and at the ſame time fooliſh enough to think it worth a wiſe man's while to meddle with ſuch affairs at all, and to accept of ſuch imaginary rewards for real ſufferings. Since then in all human Governments ſuch muſt the Governors, and ſuch the Governed eternally be, it is certain they muſt be ever big with numberleſs imperfections, and productive of abundant Evils: and it is no leſs plain, that if infinite Goodneſs could not exclude Natural and

Moral

Moral Evils, infinite Power can never prevent Political.

I HOPE, Sir, the picture I have here drawn of human nature, and human Government, will not appear to you too much of the Caricature kind: your experience in both muſt inform you that it is like, tho' your good-nature may incline you to be ſorry that it is ſo. I truſt likewiſe to your good ſenſe to diſtinguiſh, that what has here been ſaid of their imperfections, and abuſes, is by no means intended as a defence of them, but meant only to ſhew their neceſſity: to this every wiſe man ought quietly to ſubmit, endeavouring at the ſame time to redreſs them to the utmoſt of his power; which can be effected by one method only; that is, by a reformation of Manners: for as all Political Evils derive their Original from Moral, theſe can never be removed, until thoſe are firſt amended. He, therefore, who ſtrictly adheres to Virtue and Sobriety in his conduct, and inforces them by his example, does more real ſervice to a State, than he who diſplaces a bad Miniſter, or dethrones a Tyrant; this gives but a temporary relief, but that exterminates the Cauſe of the diſeaſe. No immoral Man then can poſſibly be a true patriot; and all thoſe who profeſs outrageous zeal for the liberty and proſperity of their Country, and at the ſame time infringe her laws, affront her religion,

and debauch her people, are but deſpicable Quacks, by fraud or ignorance increaſing the diſorders they pretend to remedy: as ſuch, I know, they have always appeared to your ſuperior judgment, and ſuch they are ever eſteemed by,

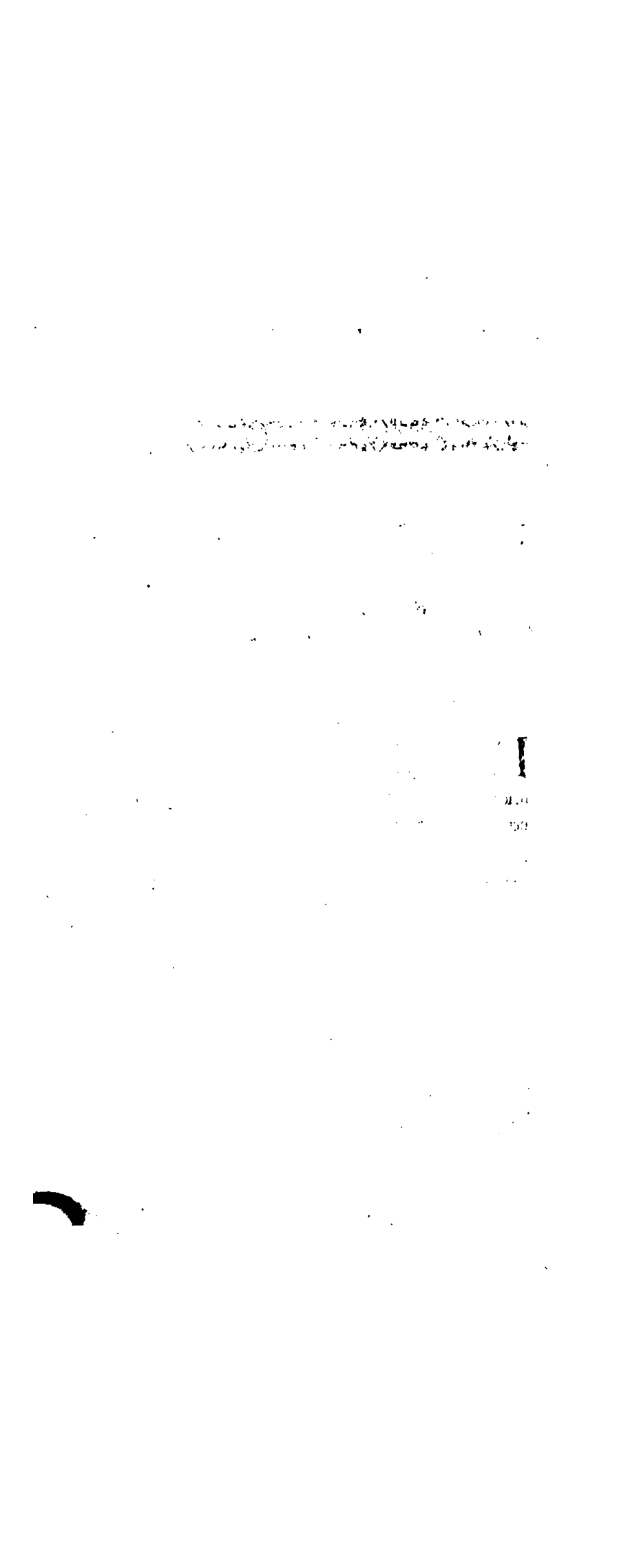
SIR, &c.

LET-

LETTER VI.

ON

RELIGIOUS EVILS.



LETTER VI.

On Religious Evils.

SIR,

I NOW come to my laſt head of Evils, which I call Religious; by which I mean all that madneſs, and folly, into which mankind have perpetually fallen under the name of Religion; together with all thoſe Perſecutions, Maſſacres, and Martyrdoms, which ſome have been induced to inflict, and others to ſuffer, from an Enthuſiaſtic Zeal for thoſe errors and abſurdities: Evils of the moſt enormous ſize, and which of all others are the moſt difficult to be accounted for, as their exiſtence ſeems moſt inconſiſtent with infinite Goodneſs, and moſt eaſily preventable by infinite Power. For, tho' human nature could not be exempted from Natural and Moral Evil (as has been ſhewn) even by Omnipotence, yet, one would

think, a far leſs degree of power might have been ſufficient to have defended it from Religious; by imparting to Mankind a true, rational, and explicit ſyſtem of Theology, and Ethicks; by which means all the abſurdities of falſe Religions, and all the calamities flowing from thoſe abſurdities, would have been effectually prevented. Wonderful therefore muſt it appear, ſince the happineſs of Men, thro' every Part of their exiſtence, ſo much depends on their Religion, that is, on their entertaining right notions of God and his Attributes, of their duty to him, and their behaviour to each other; moſt wonderful, I ſay, and aſtoniſhing it muſt appear, that a wiſe and benevolent Creator ſhould ſo far have deſerted his Creatures on this important occaſion, as to have ſuffered them thro' all generations to have wandered amidſt ſuch perilous precipices in the dark; or if at any time he has vouchſafed them any ſupernatural light, that it ſhould have been ſo faint and glimmering that it has rather ſerved to terrify them with the gloomy proſpect of their danger, than to enable them to avoid it.

If we look back as far as hiſtory will carry us, we ſhall find all ages and nations practiſing, under the name of Religion, ſuch inhuman, obſcene, ſtupid and execrable Idolatries that it would diſgrace human Nature but to enumerate them: we ſhall ſee the wiſeſt Men of the wiſeſt Countries

conſulting

conſulting Oracles of wood and ſtone, and confiding in the fooliſh ſuperſtition of the flight of birds, the entrails of beaſts, and the pecking of chickens; we ſhall ſee them butchering their innocent herds and flocks as an atonement for their vices, and ſacrificing their enemies, their ſlaves, their children, and ſometimes themſelves, to appeaſe the wrath of their imaginary Deities, of whoſe worſhip no cruelty was too horrid to be made a part; and by whoſe infamous examples no wickedneſs was too execrable to be patroniſed. At length Chriſtianity appeared, a ſketch of Morality the moſt rational, and of Religion the moſt ſublime the World had ever ſeen; which, if ever God condeſcended to reveal his Will to Man, undoubtedly makes the faireſt pretenſions to be that Revelation; and indeed, if we ſeriouſly conſider its internal Excellence, the reaſonableneſs of its Morality, the ſublimity of its Theology, that it alone has fixed the right Criterion of Virtue, alone diſcovered the magnanimity of Forgiveneſs: that its notions of the Deity, his attributes and diſpenſations, are ſo unlike all that ever entered into the heads of the wiſeſt philoſophers of preceding ages, and yet ſo well confirmed by the learned diſcoveries of all ſucceeding times; ſo far exalted above all human reaſon, and yet ſo conſonant with it, and what is moſt concluſive, ſo infinitely above the Capacities of thoſe who publiſhed them to the World;

World; if we add to this its obſcure riſe and amazing progreſs, I think, we can ſcarcely doubt but that there muſt be ſomething Supernatural in it: and yet, with all theſe marks of Divinity ſtamped upon it, far from anſwering that idea of Perfection which we might expect from the divine Interpoſition, it was but a Sketch, whoſe Outlines indeed appear the Work of a conſummate Maſter, but filled up from time to time by unequal and injudicious hands. It had many defects in its inſtitution, and was attended with many and great Evils in its conſequences; in its inſtitution it wanted Univerſality, [a] Authenticity, [b] Perſpicuity

[a] By want of Authenticity, is here meant only the want of that demonſtrable, and infallible Authority, of which all hiſtorical Facts are in their own Natures incapable; and which, had the friends of the Chriſtian Revelation never pretended to beſtow upon it, the truth of that Event had been no more diſputed, than the truth of any other well-atteſted Hiſtory whatſoever.

[b] The want of Perſpicuity in this Revelation, needs ſurely no other teſtimony, than the Millions of Writers, who for ſeventeen Centuries have laboured to demonſtrate, harmoniſe, ſyſtemiſe, illuſtrate and explain every one of its Doctrines; and the no leſs numberleſs, and various Opinions, that remain to this Day concerning them all: much indeed of this obſcurity has proceeded from Men's endeavours to make it what they fancied it ſhould have been, but for which it was never intended; that is, a regular, clear and explicit body of moral and political Inſtitutes.

and

and [a] Policy, and in its conſequences it was ſoon corrupted, and from that corruption productive of the moſt miſchievous effects. Its great Author deſigned it not to be exempted from any of theſe Imperfections. He revealed it only to a ſmall and obſcure corner of the World in Parables and Myſteries: He guarded not its original Purity, which ſeems to have died with himſelf, by committing it to any written Records, but left it in the hands of illiterate Men, who, tho' they were honeſt enough to die for it, were never wiſe enough perfectly to underſtand it. All Policy he diſclaims in expreſs Words, ſaying, *My Kingdom is not of*

[a] By Policy is here meant all Inſtitutions and Regulations of human Government, both civil, and eccleſiaſtical; concerning which the Author of the Chriſtian Religion has carefully avoided giving any directions. All theſe he has left to be ordered by every State in ſuch a manner as ſhall appear to them moſt convenient, and has commanded his diſciples to be ſubject, as Men, to their Ordinances, *not only for Wrath, but for Conſcience ſake*; but foreſeeing the infinite miſchiefs that muſt ariſe from truſting human Creatures with a divine Power, he has forbid them, as Chriſtians, either to exerciſe, or ſubmit to any authority over each other, under any pretence of its being derived from himſelf: *Ye know*, he ſays, *that the Princes of the Gentiles exerciſe dominion over them, and they that are great exerciſe authority upon them; but it ſhall not be ſo among you, &c.* Matt. xx. 25. And perhaps there is no ſtronger proof of the divine Wiſdom of this great Inſtructor of Mankind, than the extraordinary caution with which he has paſſed over a ſubject, on which no rules could be preſcribed not inconſiſtent either with Practice or with Virtue: and yet a Subject which all other Legiſlators have conſidered as their moſt important Object.

this World; that is, I meddle not with the Political Affairs of Mankind; I teach Men to deſpiſe the World, but not to govern it. Nor did He expect any better conſequences from its progreſs than thoſe which actually followed: He was by no means ignorant of its future corruption, and that, tho' his primitive inſtitution breathed nothing but Peace, and Forbearance, Good-will, and Benevolence; yet that in mixing with the Policies and Intereſts of Mankind, it would be productive of tyranny and oppreſſion, of martyrdoms and maſſacres, of national wars, and family diſſentions. *Think not*, ſays he, *I come to ſend peace on Earth, I come not to ſend peace but a Sword: for I am come to ſet a man at Variance againſt his father, and the daughter againſt her mother, and the daughter-in-law againſt her mother-in-law.* A Prophecy too fatally fulfilled!

From what inſcrutable ſource can all theſe imperfections, and all theſe conſequent Evils derive their exiſtence? On what incomprehenſible plan muſt the wiſe Diſpoſer of all things proceed, to ſuffer men thus to bewilder themſelves in the labyrinths of error, and from thence to plunge into the gulphs of wickedneſs and miſery, when the leaſt direction from his omnipotent hand would lead them thro' the flowery paths of Truth to Virtue and Felicity? Strange! that he has not given them Reaſon ſufficient to perform this important

important office! Stranger! that, if ever he condeſcended to aſſiſt that Reaſon with his infinite Wiſdom, even the Religion that reſults from that ſupernatural aſſiſtance, ſhould be ſtill deficient in almoſt every one of the principal requiſites neceſſary towards accompliſhing the great and beneficent ends it was deſigned for! that it ſhould want Univerſality to render it impartial, Authenticity to make it demonſtrable, Perſpicuity to make it intelligible, and Policy to make it uſeful to Mankind: that it ſhould immediately have been corrupted, and from that corruption been productive of all the Miſery and Wickedneſs it ſeemed calculated to prevent. But on examination we ſhall find, that theſe Evils, like all thoſe of which we have before treated, owe their exiſtence to no defect of goodneſs or power in God, but to the imperfection of Man, and their own neceſſity: that is, to the impracticability of giving a perfect Religion to an imperfect Creature: from whence this impracticability ariſes, I will endeavour to explain.

THERE are but two methods, that we know of, by which God can communicate a Religion to mankind: that is, either by the deductions which he has impowered him to make by the Force of that natural Reaſon which he has implanted in him, or by the extraordinary interpoſition of Divine Revelation: now from the firſt of theſe little need be ſaid to ſhew that nothing perfect can be expected:

expected: our Reaſon is unſtable in its foundations, and uncertain in its concluſions; our lives are extremely ſhort, and our progreſs in ſcience no leſs tedious, and retarded by numberleſs obſtacles: much of our time is employed in getting ideas, and much in acquiring language to expreſs them: few Men have capacities to reaſon, and fewer leiſure: ſome having ſenſe but no learning, want materials to work with: others having learning and no ſenſe, become more abſurd by having amaſſed much matter to miſtake about; ſo that to raiſe any tolerable ſyſtem of Religion, or Morals, from human Reaſon, requires the labours of many generations; from all which have already paſt how little truth can we collect? and yet perhaps much of that little is owing to Revelation, which we are apt to think unneceſſary from the very aſſiſtance we have received from it; like the Country-man who deſpiſed the Sun becauſe it ſhined in the day-time. We ſee but a very ſmall part of the great Whole, and ſee that ſmall part ſo ſuperficially, that we comprehend not the eſſence of any thing; neither of * Body or Spirit,

* Metaphyſicians divide all Being into Spirit and Matter: to Spirit they attribute motion, activity, ſenſibility, thought, will, and reaſon, free from all ſolidity, and extenſion; to Matter they aſcribe ſolidity and extenſion only, void of all ſelf-motion, ſenſe, and perception: but theſe deſcriptions are quite arbitrary, founded only upon their own imaginations, and by no means conſiſtent with experience: for Spirit ſeems to have many

Spirit, of [b] Space or Time, of [c] Infinity or Eternity; we know ſcarce any thing of any thing, and

many properties not ſo diſtinct from Matter by its intimate Union with it in the compoſition of all animals; and Matter has certainly many qualities contradictory to this diſtinction, ſuch as cohesion, attraction, elaſticity, electricity, fermentation, heat, and vegetation, none of which can be accounted for from the mere paſſive principles of ſolidity and extenſion.

[b] Many Philoſophers have conſidered Time and Space as real Eſſences; whereas they have certainly no more than an imaginary exiſtence, derived ſolely from the imperfection of human conceptions, and human language. They are in themſelves really nothing, and the attributes we beſtow upon them are applicable with equal propriety to nothing: that is, nothing has neither beginning nor end, nor can be comprehended within any bounds. The intervening period between hiſtorical facts we diſtinguiſh by the names of days and years; the diſtances between places we call yards and miles; and from this manner of expreſſing ourſelves they gain the appearance of being ſomething; whereas abſtracted from thoſe facts, and places, they are really nothing: ſo that if all things were annihilated, Space would immediately vaniſh, and literally ſpeaking *Time would be no more*.

[c] All the Ideas we have of Infinity and Eternity are acquired by adding in our imagination Miles to Miles, and Years to Years, by which means we come never the nearer to them: for no addition of parts can ever make any thing infinite or eternal; no two objects can be placed at an infinite diſtance, becauſe they would then be the two ends of Infinity: an infinite number is a contradiction in terms, and therefore every thing that is infinite or eternal muſt exiſt in ſome manner which bears no manner of relation to Space, or Time, and which muſt therefore be to us totally incomprehenſible.

leaſt

leaſt of all of the nature of God or ourſelves; and therefore it is by no means ſurpriſing that all Religions derived from ſuch a ſource ſhould be full of Errors and Abſurdities. If it be aſſerted, that God might have given to Man a more comprehenſive Reaſon, and a greater Inſight into Nature and Futurity: I anſwer, he certainly might, and he might alſo have given him the ſtrength of the Horſe, and the ſwiftneſs of the Stag, as well as the underſtanding of an Angel; but then he had not continued to be Man; or if he had, he would have ſuffered many ſuperior Evils from theſe unhappy acquiſitions.

If we conſider the other method, by which God can communicate a Religion to Mankind, we ſhall find it no leſs incapable of producing a perfect one; becauſe tho' God is ſufficiently able to give a perfect Religion, Man is utterly unable to receive it. God cannot impart knowledge to Creatures, of which he himſelf has made them incapable by their nature and formation: he cannot inſtruct a Mole in Aſtronomy, or an Oyſter in Muſic, becauſe he has not given them Members, nor Faculties neceſſary for the acquiſition of thoſe ſciences: neither is this any diminution of his Omnipotence, becauſe acting in ſuch a manner would be willing Contrarieties at the ſame time: it would be oppoſing his own Deſigns, making Creatures what they are not, and granting them Powers which he

thought proper to deny them: a Revelation therefore from God can never be ſuch as we might expect from infinite Power, Wiſdom and Goodneſs, but muſt condeſcend to the Ignorance and Infirmities of Man. Was the wiſeſt Legiſlator in the World to compoſe Laws for a Nurſery, they muſt be childiſh Laws: ſo was God to reveal a Religion to Mankind, tho' the Revealer was divine, the Religion muſt be human, or it could be of no uſe to thoſe for whoſe ſake it was revealed: and therefore, like them, it muſt be liable to numberleſs Imperfections, amongſt which all thoſe Deficiencies before-mentioned are abſolutely unavoidable, and impoſſible to be prevented by any power whatever: theſe are the Want of Univerſality, Authenticity, Perſpicuity and Policy; its certain Corruption, with all that inundation of Wickedneſs and Miſery which muſt flow from that Corruption. Great and numerous Evils! from which it is not difficult to ſhew, that no Revelation communicated to Man can be exempted by an Omnipotent Revealer.

First then it muſt want Univerſality: that is, however conducive it may be to the virtue and happineſs of Mankind in general, it cannot be alike communicated to all Men in all ages and all nations of the World; becauſe, from the nature of things, it muſt have a beginning and a progreſſion: it muſt at firſt be revealed at ſome time

and in ſome place; and whenever and wherever that is, there muſt have been times and places in which it was not revealed; and therefore it is impoſſible it can be Univerſal; and this not proceeding from any impotence or partiality in the Revealer, but from the modes of exiſtence of all human affairs.

It muſt likewiſe want Authenticity, that is, tho' its divine Authority may be more or leſs credible according to the circumſtances of the evidence, yet it can never be capable of a direct or demonſtrative proof; becauſe God muſt communicate this Revelation to Mankind either by a general or a particular Inſpiration: that is, either by inſpiring all Men, or by inſpiring a few to teach it to others: the firſt of theſe methods, or a Univerſal Inſpiration, is impoſſible in Nature, and abſurd even in Imagination, and would be the total alteration of human Nature: the other muſt ever be liable to infinite uncertainty, becauſe tho' a Man may poſſibly know when he himſelf is inſpired, (tho' that, I think, may be very well queſtioned) yet, that he ſhould ever produce indubitable credentials of a Divine Commiſſion to others, who are uninſpired, ſeems utterly impracticable, there being no marks by which the fact can be aſcertained, nor any faculties in the human mind which are able to diſtinguiſh it: the excellence of the Revelation he teaches, its beneficent

ends,

ends, and the miracles he may work in its confirmation, may all together render it more or less probable, but can never amount to a certain proof, because we know so little of the ends and consequences of things, and so much less of the nature of Miracles: we understand indeed nothing about them, but that we ourselves are unable to perform them; but what Beings of superior Orders may be able to do we cannot tell; nor yet what power, inclination or permission such Beings may have to deceive us. If it is impossible therefore we can be certain of the divine Authority of a Revelation, even by a personal communication with its first Author, much less can we be assured of it thro' the fallacious mediums of Tradition or History; for whoever observes the propensity Men have to impose upon themselves and others, how difficult it is to come at a true Representation of the commonest fact, even at the distance of a few miles, or a few years, will be easily convinced, that all human Tradition can be nothing more than a Complication of designed Fraud and inevitable Error; a Glass which misrepresents all objects by magnifying or diminishing them, just as it is placed by the hand of Knavery for the inspection of Folly and Credulity. History indeed carries with it a greater Authority, but must ever be liable to infinite Imperfections: we can never be certain that the Writers of it, being Men, were not imposed upon themselves, or did not intend to impose

on others; and therefore its original evidence cannot be concluſive, and muſt grow daily weaker in proportion to its antiquity: it muſt neceſſarily be ſubject to all uncertainties proceeding from the variation of languages and cuſtoms, ignorant tranſcribers, falſe tranſlations, interpolations and forgeries; and as the hiſtories of Religions are more connected with Mens intereſts than thoſe of other occurrences, ſo they muſt be ever more ſubject to theſe Frauds and Impoſitions; for the ſame reaſon that a Bank-note is more likely to be counterfeited than a News-paper. It is therefore impoſſible that Hiſtory can afford us any certain proof of a ſupernatural and miraculous diſpenſation, becauſe a Fact, unlikely to be true, can never be demonſtrated by a Relation not impoſſible to be falſe. If it be ſaid, that God may inſpire the writers of ſuch important Records with Infallibility, I anſwer, the Proof that he has ſo inſpired them will be attended with no leſs difficulty, than the proof of that divine authority which is to be eſtabliſhed by it; and it muſt ever be abſurd to prove the truth of a Revelation by the infallibility of its Records, and the infallibility of its Records from the truth of the Revelation. It is plain therefore, that, tho' infinite Goodneſs may reveal a Religion to ſo imperfect a creature as Man, yet infinite Power cannot, by reaſon of that Imperfection, give to that Revelation ſuch a degree of Authenticity, that is, ſuch a demonſtrable proof of its divine Authority,

thority, as ſome Men unreaſonably expect, and others as ridiculouſly beſtow upon it *.

It muſt want Perſpicuity: that is, it muſt be much more obſcure both in its ſpeculative and practical Doctrines, than might be expected from the interpoſition of infinite wiſdom, truth and benevolence. In its ſpeculative Doctrines, Obſcurity muſt be unavoidable, becauſe they muſt treat of ſubjects above the reach of our Comprehenſions: which neither eye has ſeen, nor ear heard, nor has entered into the heart of Man to conceive; and therefore no Power can impart to us clear and explicit Ideas of ſuch things, without firſt beſtowing on us new faculties, and new ſenſes; that is, without the total alteration of our Natures. But what is moſt of all extraordinary is, that it muſt be likewiſe to a certain degree obſcure in its practical and moral precepts; and this from a reaſon not the leſs valid for having never before been inſiſted on; which is, from the Neceſſity of Moral Evil: that is, ſince God, as has been ſhewn, was obliged by Neceſſity to admit Moral Evil into

* Nothing here offered is meant by any means to invalidate the authority of Revelation: that of the Chriſtian is poſſeſſed of as much certainty as the nature of the fact, and the nature of its evidence, will admit of. Thoſe who endeavour to beſtow more upon it, do in reality but make it leſs; and, like unſkilful Architects, weaken a Building already ſufficiently ſtrong, by overloading it with unneceſſary ſupporters.

the Creation, he muſt probably be obliged, by the ſame Neceſſity, to ſuffer it in ſome degree to continue; and therefore cannot inforce the univerſal practice of Virtue by laws ſo explicit, by threats and promiſes ſo glaring, and by commands ſo inconteſtably of divine Authority, as can admit of no doubt; for theſe would be ſo abſolutely irreſiſtable as at once to eradicate all human Vice, which has already been proved to have been admitted only from the impoſſibility of its excluſion without the introduction of greater Evils, or the loſs of ſuperior Good. If Omnipotence could not prevent the exiſtence of Moral Evil by the original formation of Man, totally to extirpate it by Revelation, would be to counteract his own wiſe, tho' incomprehenſible deſigns; and therefore a Divine Revelation can never be a regular Body of practical Inſtitutes, clear and perſpicuous, free from all doubts and alterations, inforced by perpetual Miracles, by viſible and immediate Rewards and Puniſhments; but a ſtill Voice whiſpering gentle Warnings, divine Admonitions, and ſupernatural Truths; a Light ſhining in a dark place, illuminating to a certain degree the native Obſcurity of the human Mind, and diſcovering by faint glimmerings the Deſigns of Providence, and a diſtant proſpect of a future Life.

It muſt alſo want Policy: that is, it can never preſcribe political Rules by which mankind can be

conducted

conducted in the Government of Nations, or their pretended rights of War and Peace, becauſe all theſe affairs being incapable (as has been ſhewn) of being carried on by any other means than thoſe of violence, fraud, and corruption; a Divine Revelation cannot poſſibly give any directions about them; becauſe all ſuch muſt be neceſſarily inconſiſtent either with Virtue or with Practicability: totally to forbid theſe methods of governing mankind, who can be governed by no other, would be deſtructive of all Government; to allow them, of all Morality: and therefore it is neceſſary that Men ſhould be left to act in theſe matters at their peril, as particular circumſtances may require, with only a general ſyſtem of religion and morality for their guide. If a divine Revelation can give no laws for the management of Civil Government, much leſs can it inſtitute any new policies peculiar to itſelf, under the names of Spiritual or Eccleſiaſtical; all which, however divine in their Original, muſt neceſſarily be adminiſter'd, if adminiſter'd by Man, by the ſame unjuſtifiable methods as others; with this additional inconvenience, that they could never be juſtly reſiſted. God cannot therefore, I apprehend, delegate Spiritual power to Man, without patroniſing all that Violence, Corruption, and Iniquity, which muſt reſult from it, and without which no power in the hands of Men can be exerciſed over Men. For the imperfection of Man is incompatible with the purity of

a Divine Government. The Government of all creatures muſt correſpond with their natures; and it ſeems to me as impoſſible that Societies of Men ſhould ſubmit under a Divine Government, as that Wolves and Tygers ſhould live together under the regulations of Human Policy: but moſt of all impoſſible it muſt be that a divine and human Government ſhould ſubſiſt together in the ſame Society, for they muſt immediately claſh; and whenever that happens, the leaſt ſpark of divine authority, if really divine, muſt infallibly conſume all human power, and deſtroy all Civil Government whatever.

LASTLY, it muſt very ſoon be corrupted, and from that corruption be productive of the moſt miſchievous effects: for, as the pureſt ſtream poured into an impure veſſel, muſt partake of its impurity; ſo muſt the moſt perfect Religion, that can be revealed by God to ſo imperfect a Creature as Man, partake of his imperfection, and produce many and great Evils both natural and moral; that is, much of that miſery, and wickedneſs, which it was intended to prevent: this no wiſdom can obviate, no power put a ſtop to, ſo long as that imperfection remains; but it muſt conſtantly come to paſs form a train of unavoidable conſequences, which muſt invariably follow their cauſes, ſo long as human nature continues what it is.

FOR

For inſtance, when a Divine Revelation is firſt communicated to Mankind, it muſt be received (if received at all) becauſe its precepts are approved, and its authority believed; and all thoſe nations who thus approve the one, and believe the other, muſt eſteem it both their intereſt and their duty to encourage and ſupport it. This they can effect by no other means than by granting peculiar privileges to all who profeſs it, by forming from it their national Religion, and public worſhip, and by maintaining an Order of Men to preach that Religion, and miniſter that worſhip to the people; all which amounts to a National Eſtabliſhment. Now the moment any Religion becomes national, or eſtabliſhed, its purity muſt certainly be loſt, becauſe it is then impoſſible to keep it unconnected with mens intereſts; and if connected, it muſt inevitably be perverted by them. Whenever temporal advantages are annexed to any religious profeſſion, they will be ſure to call in all thoſe who have no religion at all; knaves will embrace it for the ſake of intereſt, fools will follow them for the ſake of faſhion; and when once it is in ſuch hands, Omnipotence itſelf can never preſerve its purity. That very Order of Men, who are maintained to ſupport its intereſts, will ſacrifice them to their own; and being in the ſole poſſeſſion of all its promiſes, and all its terrors, and having the tenderneſs of Childhood, the weakneſs

of Age, and the ignorance of the vulgar to work upon; I ſay, theſe Men, veſted with all theſe powers, yet being but Men, will not fail to convert all the mighty influence they muſt derive from them to the ſelfiſh ends of their own avarice and ambition, and conſequently to the total deſtruction of its Original Purity: from it they will lay claim to powers which it never deſigned them, and to poſſeſſions to which they have no right; to make good theſe falſe pretenſions, falſe hiſtories will be forged, and fabulous traditions invented; groundleſs terrors will be flung out to operate on ſuperſtition and timidity; Creeds and Articles will be contrived to confound all Reaſon, and teſts impoſed to ſift out all who have honeſty or courage enough to reſiſt theſe unwarrantable encroachments. Devotion will be turned into farce and pageantry, to captivate mens eyes, that their pockets may with more facility be invaded: they will convert Piety into Superſtition, Zeal into Rancour, and this Religion, notwithſtanding all its Divinity, into diabolical malevolence. By degrees knaves will join them, fools believe them, and cowards be afraid of them; and having gained ſo conſiderable a part of the World to their intereſts, they will erect an independent dominion among themſelves dangerous to the liberties of Mankind, and repreſenting all thoſe who oppoſe their tyranny as God's enemies, teach it to be meritorious in his ſight to perſecute them in this

world, and damn them in another. Hence muſt ariſe Hierarchies, Inquiſitions, and Popery; for Popery is but the conſummation of that tyranny which every religious Syſtem in the hands of Men is in perpetual purſuit of, and whoſe principles they are all ready to adopt whenever they are fortunate enough to meet with it's ſucceſs.

THIS Tyranny cannot ſubſiſt without fierce and formidable Oppoſition, from whence innumerable Sects, Schiſms and Diſſentions will lift up their contentious heads, each gaping for that very power which they are fighting to deſtroy, tho' unable either to acquire or retain it; and introductive only of their conſtant concomitants, Ignorance, Self-conceit, Ill-breeding, Obſtinacy, Anarchy, and Confuſion. From theſe conteſts all kinds of Evils muſt derive their exiſtence, blood-ſhed and deſolation, perſecutions, maſſacres and martyrdoms.

ALL theſe Evils you ſee are but the neceſſary conſequences of the national Eſtabliſhment of any Religion which God can communicate to Man, in whoſe hands its Divinity can never long preſerve its purity, or keep it unmixed with his imperfections, his folly and wickedneſs. Nay, ſo far is the Divinity of a Revelation from being able to prevent its corruption, that it will but increaſe and haſten it; for the greater ſhare of

Divinity

Divinity it partakes, the greater muſt be its Excellence; the greater its Excellence, the more univerſal muſt be its Approbation; the more it is approved, the more it muſt be encouraged; the more it is encouraged, the ſooner it will be eſtabliſhed; and the ſooner it is eſtabliſhed, the ſooner it muſt be corrupted and made ſubſervient to the worſt purpoſes of the worſt Men; yet it is plain this Eſtabliſhment is no more than the conſequence of its excellence, and Men's approbation; no more than the alternative of its total extinction, and without which it cannot be preſerved at all; and therefore the corruption of every divine Revelation communicated to Man, is, by the nature of Man, clearly unavoidable.

From what has been here ſaid it appears plainly, that all the numerous Evils which adhere to, and all the miſchievous effects which follow all human Religions, whether natural or revealed, by no means owe their exiſtence to any want of power, wiſdom or goodneſs in God, but, like all others, to the imperfection of Man; that is, to his folly and wickedneſs, which muſt inevitably corrupt them. It is alſo, I think, no leſs evident that all arguments levelled againſt the divine Original of Chriſtianity, founded on its imperfections and pernicious conſequences, (which are all, I think, that have any weight) may be proved to be vain and inconcluſive; and this not by concealing or denying

thoſe

thoſe imperfections and pernicious conſequences, as many have abſurdly attempted, but by fairly ſhewing, that they all proceed from the imperfections of thoſe Creatures to whom it is revealed; and that, ſo long as thoſe continue, theſe cannot be prevented by any wiſdom, goodneſs or power whatever *.

THUS, Sir, if I miſtake not, I have ſufficiently, tho' conciſely, anſwered that moſt abſtruſe and important Queſtion, *Whence came Evil?* and proved, that all the Evils we feel, and all which we ſee around us, derogate not in the leaſt from the wiſdom, power, or goodneſs of our Creator; but proceed entirely from that ſubordination which is ſo neceſſary to the happineſs, and even to the exiſtence of the great and and incomprehenſible Whole. I have ſhewn that all ſubordination muſt imply imperfection in ſome Beings or other; and that all imperfection muſt conſiſt in the abſence of comparative Good, or the admiſſion of poſi-

* If we look into the Deiſtical Writings of all Times, we ſhall find, that they have always attacked the Chriſtian Religion moſt ſucceſsfully from this Ground; they have ſhewed the many Imperfections, that adhere to it, and then concluded, that nothing imperfect could derive its Original from God: their adverſaries have injudiciouſly denied thoſe Imperfections, which for the moſt part are true, and agreed to their concluſion, which is indiſputably falſe; for every thing we poſſeſs is derived from God, and yet we poſſeſs nothing endued with abſolute perfection.

tive

tive Evil. I have ſhewn that moſt of the Evils we uſually complain of are of the firſt kind; the want only of thoſe perfections we ſee others enjoy, or imagine infinite power might have beſtowed upon ourſelves; which are therefore in fact no Evils at all; that thoſe of the latter ſort, or poſitive Evils, are ſuch as from the nature of things muſt intrude themſelves into all Creation, and therefore that Omnipotence can do no more than make choice of that Syſtem which admits the feweſt; being obliged by the imperfection of all created Beings, the unactableneſs of Matter, and ſome incomprehenſible connection between Good and Evil, Happineſs and Miſery, to admit both, or to give exiſtence to neither. I have likewiſe ſhewn that Moral Evil may have its neceſſity and utility as well as Natural; at leaſt, that if Natural Evils are neceſſary, Moral ones are expedient, to prevent that neceſſary Miſery from falling to the ſhare of perfect Innocence, and to convert unavoidable ſufferings into juſt puniſhments; that tho' the eſſence of all Moral Evil conſiſts in the production of Natural, yet it may have ſome collateral tendency to Good; and that the Wicked, whilſt they are juſtly puniſhed for the miſeries which they occaſion, may probably, by that very guilt and puniſhment, ſome way or other contribute to univerſal happineſs. I have ſhewn that if Natural and Moral Evils could not be prevented, the exiſtence of Political and Religious

ligious Evils muſt of courſe be unavoidable, they being but the certain conſequences of the other; that all human Government muſt be in the higheſt degree imperfect, and big with all manner of Evils, being the dominion of ignorant and wicked creatures over each other; that, as ſuch creatures can be governed only by fear of puniſhment or hopes of reward, all Government amongſt them muſt be founded on Violence or Corruption, and ever ſupported and adminiſtred by the ſame vicious and unjuſtifiable methods: that no power whatever can give a perfect Religion, to ſo imperfect a creature as Man, either by Nature or Revelation; not by Nature, becauſe, whilſt that is human Nature, he can never diſcover by Reaſon the Truths on which a perfect Syſtem of Theology or Ethics can be erected; not by Revelation, becauſe he wants faculties to comprehend ſuch ſupernatural diſcoveries, altho' they ſhould be imparted to him; that, was he capable of once receiving a perfect Religion, it is not poſſible he could long retain it; becauſe, if it could be kept entirely ſeparate from his worldly intereſts, it would ſoon be neglected and periſh in oblivion; and, if it was not, ſuch a connection would quickly corrupt its purity, and deſtroy its eſſence, ſo that national eſtabliſhments would be neceſſary for its ſupport, and yet infallibly productive of its deſtruction. That all theſe evils proceed not from wrong diſpoſitions or accidental cauſes, but

ſingly and ſolely from the imperfection of Man; and yet that in the gradation from infinite perfection to abſolute nothing, there muſt be one rank occupied by ſuch a Creature as Man with all his imperfections about him; that theſe imperfections muſt be annexed to his ſituation, and adhere to every thing that relates to him, to his happineſs, to his morals, to his government, and to his religion: that, in like manner, all other created Beings muſt have Evils and Imperfections peculiar to their ſtations, and proportioned to their inferiority; notwithſtanding all which, there is as much Good, and as little Evil in the univerſal ſyſtem, as the nature of Creation will admit of; and that therefore it is a work equal to what we might expect from the Operations of infinite Benevolence joined with infinite Power.

PHILO-

PHILOSOPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE NATURE of TIME.

Tempus item per ſe non eſt.
LUCRET.

W

PHILOSOPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE NATURE of TIME.

WE are ſo accuſtomed to connect our Ideas of Time with the Hiſtory of what paſſes in it, that is, to miſtake a ſucceſſion of Thoughts and Actions for Time, that we find it extremely difficult, perhaps impoſſible, totally to ſeparate, or diſtinguiſh them from each other: and indeed had we power to effect this in our minds, all human language is ſo formed, that it would fail us in our expreſſion: yet certain it is, that Time, abſtracted from the thoughts, actions, and motions which paſs in it, is actually nothing: it is only the Mode in which ſome created Beings are ordained to exiſt, but in itſelf has really no exiſtence at all.

THO' this Opinion may ſeem chimerical to many, who have not much conſidered the ſubject, yet

it is by no means new, for it was long ſince adopted by ſome of the moſt celebrated Philoſophers of Antiquity, particularly by the Epicureans, and is thus well expreſſed by Lucretius:

Tempus item per ſe non eſt; ſed rebus ab ipſis
Conſequitur ſenſus, tranſactum quod ſit in ævo,
Tum quæ res inſtat, quid porro deinde ſequatur;
Nec per ſe, quemquam tempus ſentire, fatendum eſt,
Semotum ab uſum, motu, placidaque quiete.

Time of itſelf is nothing; but from Thought
Receives its riſe, by lab'ring Fancy wrought,
From things conſidered: while we think on ſome
As preſent, ſome as paſt, and ſome to come:
No thought can think on Time, that's ſtill confeſs'd,
But thinks on things in motion, or at reſt.

CREECH.

FROM obſerving the diurnal revolutions of the Sun, and the various tranſactions, which paſs during thoſe revolutions, we acquire conceptions of Days; by dividing theſe Days we form Hours, Minutes, and Seconds; and by multiplying them, Months, Years, and Ages; then by meaſuring theſe imaginary periods againſt each other, and beſtowing on each diſtinct denominations, we give them the appearance of ſomething real: Yeſterday, which is paſt, and To-morrow, which is not yet

yet come, aſſume the ſame reality as the preſent Day; and thus we imagine Time to reſemble a great Book, one of whoſe pages is every day wrote on, and the reſt remain blank to be filled up in their turns with the Events of Futurity; whilſt in fact this is all but the deluſion of our own Imaginations, and Time is nothing more, than the manner in which paſt, preſent, and future Events ſucceed each other: yet is this deluſion ſo correſpondent with our preſent ſtate, and ſo woven up with all human language, that without much reflection it cannot be perceived, nor when perceived can it be remedied: nor can I, while endeavouring to prove Time to be Nothing, avoid treating it as Something in almoſt every line.

There ſeems to be in the nature of things, two Modes of Exiſtence; one, in which all Events paſt, preſent, and to come, appear in one View; which, if the expreſſion may be allowed, I ſhall call perpetually inſtantaneous; and which, as I apprehend, conſtitutes Eternity; the other, in which all things are preſented ſeparately, and ſucceſſively, which produces what we call Time.

Of the firſt of theſe human Reaſon can afford us no manner of conception; yet it aſſures us, on the ſtrongeſt evidence, that ſuch muſt be the Exiſtence of the Supreme Creator of all things, that ſuch probably may be the Exiſtence of many

ſuperior Orders of created Beings, and that ſuch poſſibly may be our own in another ſtate: to Beings ſo conſtituted, all Events paſt, preſent, and future are preſented in one congregated Maſs, which to us are ſpread out in Succeſſion to adapt them to our temporary Mode of Perception: in theſe Ideas have no Succeſſion, and therefore to their thoughts, actions, or exiſtence, Time, which is Succeſſion only, can bear not the leaſt relation whatſoever. To exiſtence of this kind alone can Eternity belong; for Eternity can never be compoſed of finite parts, which however multiplied, can never become infinite; but muſt be ſomething ſimple, uniform, invariable, and indiviſible; permanent, tho' inſtantaneous, and endleſs without progreſſion. There are ſome remarkable expreſſions both in the Old and New Teſtament, alluding to this Mode of Exiſtence; in the former God is denominated *I am*[a]; and in the latter Chriſt ſays, *before Abraham was, I am*[b]: both evidently implying Duration without Succeſſion: from whence the Schoolmen probably derive their obſcure Notions of ſuch a kind of Duration, which they explain by the more obſcure term of a *punctum ſtans*.

With the other Mode of Exiſtence we are ſufficiently acquainted, being that in which Providence has placed us, and all things around us; during our reſidence on this terreſtrial Globe; in

[a] Exod. iv. 14. [b] John viii. 58.

which

which all ideas follow each other in our Minds in a regular and uniform ſucceſſion, not unlike the Tickings of a Clock; and by that means all Objects are preſented to our imaginations in the ſame progreſſive manner: and if any vary much from that deſtined pace, by too rapid, or too ſlow a motion, they immediately become to us totally imperceptible. We now perceive every one, as it paſſes, thro' a ſmall aperture ſeparately, as in the Camera Obſcura, and this we call Time; but at the concluſion of this State we may probably exiſt in a manner quite different; the window may be thrown open, the whole proſpect appear at one view, and all this Apparatus, which we call Time, be totally done away: for Time is certainly nothing more, than the ſhifting of Scenes neceſſary for the Performance of this Tragi-comical Farce, which we are here exhibiting, and muſt undoubtedly end with the concluſion of the Drama. It has no more a real Eſſence, independent of thought, and action, than ſight, hearing and ſmell have independent of their proper Organs, and the Animals to whom they belong, and when they ceaſe to exiſt, Time can be no more. There are alſo ſeveral paſſages in the Scriptures declaring this annihilation of Time, at the Conſummation of all things: *And the Angel, which I ſaw ſtand upon the Sea and the Earth, lifted up his hand towards Heaven, and ſwore by him that liveth for ever and ever, &c. that there ſhould be Time no longer* [a].

[a] Rev. x. 5.

To this Opinion of the Non-entity of Time it has by ſome been objected, that Time has many attributes and powers inherent in it's Nature; and that whatever has attributes and powers, muſt itſelf exiſt: it is infinite, ſay they, and eternal; it contains all things; and forces itſelf on our imaginations in the abſence of all other Exiſtence: but to this it may be anſwered, that the human Mind is able in the very ſame manner to realize Nothing; and then all the ſame attributes and powers, are applicable with equal propriety to that Nothing thus ſuppoſed to be Something:

* Nothing, thou elder Brother ev'n to Shade!
Thou had'ſt a Being, ere the world was made,
And well fix'd are alone of ending not afraid.

Nothing is infinite, and eternal; that is, hath neither beginning, nor end: it contains all things; that is, it begins where all Exiſtence ends; and therefore ſurrounds, and contains all things: it forces itſelf on the Mind in the abſence of all Exiſtence; that is, where we ſuppoſe there is no Exiſtence, we muſt ſuppoſe there is Nothing: this exact reſemblance of their attributes and powers, more plainly demonſtrates, that Time is Nothing.

From this Non-exiſtence of Time thus eſtabliſhed, many Concluſions will ariſe both uſeful,

* Lord Rocheſter.

and

and entertaining; from whence perhaps new lights may be thrown on ſeveral Speculations religious and metaphyſical, whoſe Outlines I ſhall juſt venture to trace, and leave them to be filled up by abler pens.

1ſt. If Time be no more than the Succeſſion of Ideas, and Actions, however theſe may be accelerated, or retarded, Time will be juſt the ſame: that is, neither longer or ſhorter, provided the ſame Ideas, and Actions, ſucceed one another, as far, I mean, as it relates to Beings ſo thinking and acting. For inſtance, were the Earth, and all the Celeſtial Bodies, to perform the ſame Revolutions in one Day, which they now perform in a whole Year, and were all the Ideas, Actions, and Lives of Mankind haſtened on in the ſame proportion, the period of our Lives would not be in the leaſt ſhortened; but that Day would be exactly equal to the preſent Year: if in the ſpace of ſeventy or eighty of theſe Days a Man was born, educated, and grown up, had exerciſed a profeſſion, had ſeen his Children come to maturity, his Grand-children ſucceed them, and during this period had had all his Ideas and Actions, all his Enjoyments and Sufferings, accelerated in the ſame proportion, he would not only ſeem to himſelf, and to all who lived in the ſame ſtate with him, and meaſured Time by the ſame ſtandard, to have lived as long, but actually, and

in

in fact would have lived as long as one, who reſides on this Globe as great a number of our preſent years.

2dly. This being the caſe it follows, that the Life of every Man muſt be longer, or ſhorter, in proportion to the number of his Thoughts, and Actions: for was it poſſible for a Man to think and act as much in an hour, as in a year, that hour, as far as it related to him, would not only ſeem, but actually become a year. On the other hand, was it poſſible for a Man totally to abſtain from thinking and acting for an hour, or a year, Time, with regard to him, for that period, would have no exiſtence; or could he keep one Idea fixed in his mind, and continue one ſingle Act during the ſame ſpace, Time, which is a ſucceſſion only of Ideas and Actions, muſt be equally annihilated: whether theſe Ideas and Actions are exerciſed on great or little occaſions, whether they are productive of pleaſing, or painful ſenſations, with regard to this purpoſe their effects will be the ſame: neither their importance or conſequences will add any thing to Time, but their numbers and celerity moſt undoubtedly will. Our Lives therefore, when diverſified with a variety of Objects, and buſied in a multiplicity of purſuits, tho' perhaps leſs happy, will certainly be longer, than when doſed away in ſloth, inactivity, and apathy.

3dly.

3dly. From hence it is evident, that we can form no Judgment of the duration of the Lives, Enjoyments, and Sufferings of other Animals, with the progreſſion of whoſe Ideas we are totally unacquainted, and who may be framed in that reſpect, as well as in many others, ſo widely different from ourſelves. The gaudy Butterfly, that flutters in the ſunſhine but for a few months, may live as long as the ſtupid Tortoiſe that breathes for a Century; the Inſect, that ſurvives not one diurnal revolution of the Sun, may, for any thing we know, enjoy an Age of happineſs; and the miſerable Horſe, that appears to us to ſuffer the drudgery of ten or twenty years, may finiſh his laborious taſk in as many Months, Days, or Hours.

4thly. For the like reaſons we can judge but very imperfectly of what are real Evils in the univerſal Syſtem, whilſt we remain in this temporal ſtate of Exiſtence, in which all things are exhibited to us by ſcraps, one after the other: for theſe detached portions, which viewed ſeparately, ſeem but miſhapen blotches, may to Beings, who in an eternal State ſee paſt, preſent, and future, all delineated on one canvaſs, appear as well-diſpoſed Shades neceſſary to render perfect the whole moſt beautiful Landſkip. Nay, even Pain, that taken ſingly is ſo pungent, and diſagreeable a potion, when thrown into the cup of univerſal happineſs,

pineſs, may perhaps add to it a flavour, which without this infuſion it could not have acquired.

5thly. If Time has itſelf no exiſtence, it can never put an end to the exiſtence of any thing elſe; and this ſeems no inconcluſive Argument for the Immortality of the Soul: for if any thing is, and no cauſe appears to us, why it ſhould ceaſe to be, we can have no good reaſon to believe, that it will not continue. Whatever has no connection with Time muſt be eternal: now the only property of the Soul, with which we are acquainted, is Thought, which bears no relation to Time; whence it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that the ſoul itſelf is equally unconnected with it, and conſequently eternal. Even in material Beings we ſee continual Mutations, but can perceive no Symptoms of Annihilation; and therefore we have ſurely leſs cauſe to ſuſpect it in immaterial: from whence I am inclined to think, that the Eſſences of all things are eternal, that is, unrelative to Time, and that it is only our manner of perceiving them, that cauſes them to appear temporal to us; paſt, preſent, and future being not inherent in their Natures, but only in our progreſſive mode of perception.

6thly. From what has been ſaid, we may perceive into what amazing abſurdities many of our ableſt Divines and Metaphyſicians have plunged in their inveſtigations of Eternity, for making

which

which their Receipt is uſually this: they take of Time a ſufficient quantity, and chopping it in ſmall pieces, they diſpoſe them in imaginary lengths, which they diſtinguiſh by the names of minutes, hours, days, years, and ages: then feeling in their own Minds a power of multiplying theſe as often as they think fit, they heap millions upon millions; and finding this power to be a Machine, that may be worked backwards and forwards with equal facility, they extend their Line both ways, and ſo their Eternity is compleated, and fit for uſe: they then divide it in the middle, and out of a ſingle Eternity they make two, as they term them, *a parte ante*, and *a parte poſt*; each of which having one end, may be drawn out, like a Juggler's Ribband, as long as they pleaſe. The Contradictions ſo manifeſt in this Syſtem, ſufficiently declare its falſhood: for in adopting it we muſt acknowledge, that each half of this Eternity is equal to the whole; that in each the number of days cannot exceed that of the months, nor the months be more numerous than the years, they being all alike infinite; that whether it commenced yeſterday, or ten thouſand years ſince, the length of its duration muſt be the ſame; for the length depends not on the beginning, but on the end, but that cannot be different, where there is no end at all: the abſurdity of all theſe propoſitions are too glaring, to ſtand in need of any refutation; for it is evident, that whatever

contains parts, length or numbers can never be infinite; whatever had a Beginning muſt have an End, becauſe Beginning and Ending are the Modes of temporary Exiſtence: what has no End could have no Beginning, becauſe both are equally inconſiſtent with Eternity. In truth, all theſe abſurdities ariſe from applying to Eternity our Ideas of Time, which, being two Modes of Exiſtence intirely different, bear not the leaſt relation to each other: Time is in its Nature finite and ſucceſſive, Eternity infinite, and inſtantaneous; and therefore their properties are no more applicable to each other, than thoſe of Sounds to Colours, or of Colours to Sounds; and we can no more form Eternity out of Time, than by mixing Red, Blue, and Green, we can compoſe an Anthem or an Opera.

7thly. From hence appears the neceſſity, in our conſiderations on theſe Subjects, of keeping our Ideas of theſe two Modes of Exiſtence intirely, and conſtantly diſtinct, as they themſelves are in Nature: by which means we ſhall preſently ſweep away many of thoſe Theological, and Metaphyſical Cobwebs, which now encumber, and diſgrace our moſt learned Libraries; and cut ſhort many impertinent Enquiries concerning the Creation of the Univerſe, God's Foreknowldge, and Predeſtination, the præexiſtent, and future State of Souls, the Injuſtice of eternal Puniſhments, and the

Sleep

Sleep of the Soul, with numberleſs others of the ſame kind, all derived from injudiciouſly blending, and confounding theſe two kinds of Exiſtence together, and applying Notions and Expreſſions to one, which can only with propriety belong to the other.

To enter largely into theſe abſtruſe and intricate Subjects, would require a folio; I ſhall therefore only ſay one word or two to each.

It has been frequently aſked, why God created the Univerſe at the Time in which he did create it, and why he ſuffered millions of Ages to paſs away before the commencement of ſo glorious a Work? To this it may be replied with equal conciſeneſs and truth, that in fact no ſuch Ages ever did, or could paſs before it was created; nor was it created in any Time at all; for neither the Eſſence or Actions of God have the moſt diſtant relation to Time; he has been pleaſed in his infinite Wiſdom to beſtow on ſome parts of his Creation a temporal Mode of Exiſtence, and from this alone Time derives its Origin: to ſuppoſe Time antecedent to temporal Exiſtence, is to ſuppoſe Effects to precede their Cauſes; and not leſs abſurd, than to imagine, that there could be perception before ſenſitive Beings, or Thought before intelligent Beings exiſted. This very Queſtion proves the abſurdity of connecting Time and

Eternity

Eternity together; for if God's power of creating is coæval with his Exiſtence, that Exiſtence eternal, and that Eternity only Time extended; this evident contradiction follows, that God, tho' always equally able, yet in fact never could create any thing ſo ſoon, but that he might have created it ſooner: that is in other words, that he never could create any thing as ſoon as he could. All this puzzle ariſes from our fooliſhly ſuppoſing, that Eternal and Temporal Beings muſt act in a manner ſimilar to each other: if we do any thing, it muſt be done at ſome time or other; but God acts in ways as different from ours, as inconceivable to us; his ways are not like our ways, nor his thoughts like our thoughts: one day is to him as a thouſand years, and a thouſand years as one day; that is, neither of them, with his manner of exiſting, thinking, or acting, have any connection whatever.

All Diſputes about God's Foreknowledge, and Predeſtination, are of the ſame Species, and derive their birth intirely from the ſame abſurd ſuppoſition. Foreknowledge and Predeſtination imply Succeſſion, and are relative to Time, which has no relation to the Eſſence or Perception of the Creator of all things; and therefore in the ſenſe uſually applied to them, cannot with any propriety be attributed to him. He knows all things, and ordains all things; but as all things are equally preſent

present to the divine Intuition, it is impossible, that he can foreknow, or predestinate any thing.

Of the same kind are all Questions concerning the pre-existent, and future State of the Soul, arising likewise from confounding our Ideas of these two Modes of Existence, temporal and eternal: whenever the Soul is united with a Body, perceiving all things by Succession thro' material Organs, it acquires Ideas of Time, and can form none of Existence unconnected with it; but whenever this Union is dissolved, it probably returns again to its native Mode of eternal Existence, in which the whole circle of its perception being at once visible, it has nothing further to do with Time; it is neither old, or young, it lives no more in the seventeenth than in the seventh Century, no nearer to the End, than the Beginning of the World: all ideas of Years and Ages, of Pre-existence and Futurity, of Beginning and Ending, will be totally obliterated: and possibly it will be as incapable of forming any conceptions of Time, as it is now of Eternity. The Soul therefore being quite unconnected with Time, whenever it is unconnected with a Body, cannot properly be said to exist in another Time, either prior or posterior, but only in another manner.

Every Argument also endeavouring to prove the Injustice and Disproportion of eternal Punish-

ments for temporal Offences, is founded on the ſame erroneous principles, and admits of the ſame anſwer; that all computations of the magnitude of ſuch Puniſhments from their Duration, by heaping years, and ages upon each other, are abſurd, and inconſiſtent with that State in which they are to be inflicted: Crimes will there be puniſhed according to the degrees of their malignity, but neither for a long, or a ſhort, nor for any Time at all: for all Puniſhments muſt be correſpondent to the State, in which they are ſuffered: in an Eternal State, they muſt be Eternal, in a Temporal they muſt be Temporal; for it is equally impoſſible, that a Being can be puniſhed for a Time, where no Time is, as that it ſhould be puniſhed everlaſtingly in a State, which itſelf cannot laſt. As therefore from the nature of things, this Diſpenſation is neceſſary, it cannot be unjuſt, and from the infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs of the Author of Nature, we may reaſonably preſume that it cannot be diſproportioned to its ſeveral Objects.

The Non-entity of Time will ſerve likewiſe to ſettle a late ingenious Controverſy, and ſhew, that like moſt others of the kind, it is a diſpute only upon Words: this controverſy is concerning the Sleep of the Soul; that is, whether it enters into a State of Happineſs, or Miſery immediately on its diſſolution from the Body, or

remains

remains in a State of profound Inſenſibility, till the general Judgment, and then receives its final Sentence, and ſuffers it's Execution: for if Time is nothing but the thoughts and actions which paſs in it, the condition of the Soul, whether it ſleeps or not, will be exactly the ſame; nor will the final Sentence be one moment deferred by ſuch a State of Inſenſibility, how long ſoever it may continue; for, tho' during that period many Revolutions of the Sun, and of Empires may take place, many millions of thoughts and actions may paſs, which not only meaſure Time, but create it, yet with regard to the Soul ſo ſleeping, none of theſe, that is, no Time will paſs at all; and, if no Time intervenes, Judgment, however remote with regard to others, will as inſtantly follow it's Diſſolution, as if that had happened the precedent moment. But if, according to the foregoing principles, the Soul in a ſeparate State bears no relation to Time, then no Event in which it is there concerned can be before or after another, either nearer or farther from any period, from Death or Judgment, from the Creation or Diſſolution of this planetary Syſtem: this we ſee muſt at once put an end to all diſputes on this ſubject, and render the uſe of Soporifics intirely needleſs.

After all that has been here advanced, I am not inſenſible, that we are here ſo conſtantly converſant with temporal Objects, and ſo totally

unacquainted with eternal, that few, very few will ever be able to abſtract Exiſtence from Time, or comprehend that any thing can exiſt out of, and unconnected with it: in vain ſhould I ſuggeſt, that the various planets are peopled by the divine Wiſdom with a variety of Beings, and even this terreſtrial Globe with innumerable Creatures, whoſe Situations are ſo different, that their manner of Exiſtence is quite unknown and incomprehenſible to each other; that millions inhabit the impenetrable receſſes of the unfathomable Ocean, who can no more form conceptions of any Exiſtence beyond the limits of that their native Element, than we ourſelves can beyond the boundaries of Time; and that therefore in reality, Time may be no more neceſſary to Exiſtence than Water, tho' the Mode of that Exiſtence we are unable to comprehend. But, I well know, theſe analogous arguments have little weight; the prejudice of Education, the ſtrength of Habit, and the force of Language, all formed on the ſuppoſed Union of Exiſtence with Time, will perſuade Men to reject this Hypotheſis as vain and chimerical. To all buſy Men, and Men of Buſineſs, to all jogging on in the beaten roads of Profeſſions, or ſcrambling up the precipices of Ambition, theſe conſiderations muſt appear unprofitable Illuſions, if not incomprehenſible Nonſenſe; for to endeavour to convince a Merchant ſubſiſting on long credit, a Lawyer inriched by delay, a Divine who has

purchaſed a next preſentation, a General who is in no hurry to fight, or a Miniſter whoſe Object is the continuance of his power, that Time is Nothing, is an arduous Taſk, and very unlikely to be attended with ſucceſs. Whoever deſires to taſte or underſtand ſuch abſtracted Speculations, muſt leave for a while the noiſy buſtle of worldly Occupations, and retire into the ſequeſtered Shades of Solitude and Contemplation: from whence he will return certainly not richer, poſſibly not wiſer, but probably more ſuſceptible of amuſement from his own company for want of better, and more able to draw entertainment from his own Imaginations: which in his journey thro' Life he will often find an Acquiſition not altogether inconſiderable.

[redacted]

REFLECTIONS

ON

SEVERAL SUBJECTS.

REFLECTIONS

ON

SEVERAL SUBJECTS.

ALL fooliſh people are wiſe enough to be ſoon tired of their own company; and therefore impatient of ſolitude, perpetually impoſe it upon their unfortunate acquaintance.

THOSE, who are extremely civil, are ſeldom ſociable; becauſe they receive more trouble, than entertainment from company.

THAT men uſually grow more covetous as they grow older, does not ſo much proceed from the increaſe of their affection for wealth, as from the decreaſe of their inclinations for any thing beſide: their regard for money continues the ſame, but they meet with fewer temptations to part with it: their

their love of pleaſures is leſſened by ſatiety, their ambition by diſappointments, their prodigality by experience, and their generoſity by ingratitude.

EVERY year, as we grow older, appears ſhorter than the preceding, and the reaſon of it is this; all our ideas of time muſt be derived from that portion of it, in which we have already exiſted, and that muſt be the ſtandard by which we meaſure it; as this ſtandard therefore extends itſelf by our living longer, ſo every period muſt appear ſhorter in proportion to it: thus when we have lived ten years, one year is the tenth part of the duration of our whole exiſtence; but when we have lived eighty, it is then but the eightieth part of the ſame term.

HONOUR is but a fictitious kind of honeſty; a mean, but a neceſſary ſubſtitute for it in ſocieties, who have none: it is a ſort of paper credit, with which men are obliged to trade, who are deficient in the ſterling caſh of true morality and religion.

WOMEN are certainly not at all inferior to men in reſolution, and perhaps much leſs in courage, than is commonly imagined: the reaſon they appear ſo is, becauſe women affect to be more afraid, than they really are, and men pretend to be leſs.

MEN's opinions much oftener proceed from their actions, than their actions from their opinions: they

they act firſt, and then with great facility reconcile their principles to their conduct; for which reaſon we find many, whom no advantage can induce to do any thing, which appears to them wrong; but of that many, very few, who can ever be convinced that any thing is wrong, from whence either pleaſure or profit accrues to themſelves.

WERE all men honeſt, the world would go on much more happily than it does at preſent; but were all men wiſe, it would not go on at all: ſo greatly preferable is honeſty to underſtanding.

As a man of ſenſe can uſually out-wit a fool, becauſe his deſigns are inconceivable to his adverſary's underſtanding; ſo a fool will ſometimes be too cunning for a wiſe man, for the very ſame reaſon; that is, becauſe he will conceive ſchemes, which could never enter into a wiſer head than his own. Counter-plotting an abſurd fellow is like fighting a left-handed fencer; you receive a wound, becauſe it comes in a direction from whence you had no reaſon to expect it, and he gains a victory merely by his aukwardneſs.

MUCH ſpirit and little ſenſe are the worſt ingredients of which a human creature can be compoſed; he, who has much ſpirit, and much underſtanding, will probably make a great and illuſtrious character: he, who has little ſpirit and little

little ſenſe, may prove an honeſt, uſeful, and happy man: but he, who is ſo unfortunate as to have a great deal of ſpirit, and a ſmall ſhare of underſtanding, muſt ever be miſchievous to others, and miſerable in himſelf.

Contempt among mankind, like action and re-action in ſolid bodies, is always reciprocal, and equal; whoever deſpiſes his company, may be aſſured, that he is not leſs deſpiſed by them: a wiſe man is juſt as much deſpiſed amongſt fools, as a fool amongſt wiſe men: whores and gameſters are not more contemptible in the eyes of others, than all others are in theirs, who are not of their own genteel fraternity.

Our reſentments and attachments are commonly the principal obſtacles which retard us in our progreſs to wealth and greatneſs: he, who can totally exonerate himſelf of theſe two grand impediments, the remembrance of paſt injuries, and gratitude for paſt benefactions, can hardly fail of travelling through the dirty roads of buſineſs and ambition, with great alacrity and ſucceſs.

Thoſe, who live idly on hereditary fortunes, are apt to look with much envy on the wealth and affluence enjoyed by men in profeſſions, and with no leſs indignation on the unjuſt means, by which, in moſt profeſſions, they are acquired: but they ought

ought to conſider, that to theſe very means, unjuſt as they are, they themſelves are indebted for the ſecurity of their own lives, liberties, and eſtates; for ſuch is the nature of mankind, that if, in their general ſtruggle for wealth and power, they cannot ſucceed by art, they will infallibly make uſe of force; that is, if they are not indulged in ſome ingenious, learned, and legal methods of politely preying on each other, they will quickly have recourſe to fire and ſword.

He, who will not be cheated a little, will be abuſed a great deal, and by that means ſuffer no leſs in his fortune, than in his reputation: our firſt leſſon, therefore, in the art of œconomy, ſhould ever be to learn how to permit ourſelves to be properly impoſed on, in due proportion to our ſituation and circumſtances.

No two qualities in the human mind are more eſſentially different, though often confounded, than pride, and vanity: the proud man entertains the higheſt opinion of himſelf, the vain man ſtrives only to infuſe ſuch an opinion into the minds of others; the proud man thinks admiration his due; the vain man is ſatisfied if he can but obtain it: pride by ſtatelineſs demands reſpect; vanity by little artifices ſolicits applauſe: pride, therefore, makes men diſagreeable, and vanity ridiculous.

Who-

WHOEVER appears to have a great deal of cunning, muſt, in reality, have but very little; for if he had much, he would have enough to conceal it.

THE vice of ingratitude cannot be ſo frequent as it is uſually repreſented, becauſe the inſtances of real and diſintereſted obligations, from whence alone it can proceed, are very rare.

APPLAUSE is more frequently acquired by profuſeneſs, than by charity; that is, by ſuffering ourſelves to be impoſed on, than by beſtowing our money on proper objects: becauſe thoſe who over-reach us, look upon their acquiſitions as the juſt reward of their own ſuperior abilities, and are therefore not unwilling to publiſh them; whereas, thoſe who receive our donations, feel the weight of obligations, always implying an inferiority, which men little care to remember, and leſs to talk of.

PAINTERS of human nature, like thoſe of human faces, are of two ſorts; the one give us beautiful pictures, but without the leaſt reſemblance of thoſe who ſit for them; the other draw ſtrong likeneſſes, but for the moſt part ſomething uglier than the originals.

WHO-

WHOEVER would deceive the multitude, let him not deſpair of perſuading them to believe any one thing in the world, except truth.

ADVICE is ſeldom well received, well intended, or productive of any good: it is ſeldom well received, becauſe it implies a ſuperiority of judgment in the giver; and it is ſeldom intended for any other end, than to ſhew it: it is ſeldom of any ſervice to the giver, becauſe it more frequently makes him an enemy, than a friend; and as ſeldom to the receiver, becauſe, if he is not wiſe enough to act properly without it, he will ſcarcely be wiſe enough to diſtinguiſh that which is good.

HE, who will not change his principles, will find himſelf, in a little time, under a neceſſity to change his party.

LIBERTY is a fine-ſounding word; but moſt of thoſe who uſe it, mean nothing more by it than a liberty to oppreſs others, themſelves uncontrouled by any ſuperior authority.

As property always produces power, ſo power is always convertible into property: therefore it is demonſtrable, that the corruption of parliaments muſt ever increaſe with the increaſe of their power, and can be leſſened only by the diminution of their importance. How abſurd, therefore, are thoſe,

who labour at the ſame time to increaſe liberty, and to deſtroy corruption; that is, who endeavour to give the people more power to carry to market, and at the ſame time to hinder them from ſelling it?

THE chief buſineſs of a government is like that of a nurſe, to hinder thoſe who are under its care from doing miſchief to themſelves; of which they are in perpetual purſuit, and perpetually angry with thoſe who endeavour to prevent them.

WE need not travel far over the world, to acquire a ſufficient knowledge of human nature and human government: by ſagacity and obſervation it may be eaſily learned within the narrow limits of a ſingle pariſh, the meaneſt veſtry being actuated by the ſame principles, and managed by the ſame arts, as the moſt holy ſynod, or the moſt auguſt ſenate: the conduct of the drama is nearly the ſame; the difference lies only in the addreſs and dignity of the actors.

THERE is, undoubtedly, great difference in the wiſdom and honeſty of particular men, but very little in thoſe of large numbers in the ſame ſituation and circumſtances; as individual grains of corn may differ much in ſize and weight, but two buſhels taken out of the ſame heap, will certainly be nearly ſimilar.

IT

It ſeems a fundamental principle of modern politics, that every means that can bring wealth into a nation, muſt add juſt ſo much to its happineſs, proſperity, and duration; but this is no more true, than that every ſingle perſon is happy, healthy, and long-lived, in proportion to his riches.

It is often aſſerted, that the landed and trading intereſt of a nation muſt ever be inſeparable; and each of them aſſure us, that their own is the intereſt of the public: but all theſe propoſitions are fallacious; there are few inſtances in which the landed and trading intereſts coincide; in moſt they are diametrically oppoſite; nor are either, or both of them, always the intereſt of the public; whoſe true intereſt is only to keep them from deſtroying each other, and involving herſelf in dangers and expences.

The landed intereſt of this nation, like the ſilly and defenceleſs ſheep, in ſilence offers its throat to the butchery of every adminiſtration, and is eat up by every ravenous profeſſion; while the trading intereſt, like the hungry and unmannerly hog, devours every thing, and if a finger is but laid upon it, the whole country is diſtracted with the outcry.

It is not a little ſurpriſing, that mankind have in all times ſo much delighted in war, and that,

notwithſtanding all the miſeries it has brought upon them, they ſhould ſtill continue to ruſh into it with as much alacrity as ever: the true, though ſecret reaſon of which, is certainly this: there is implanted in human nature, corrupt as it is, ſo ſtrong an approbation of virtue, that however determined men are to indulge their evil inclinations, they never enjoy them with any ſatisfaction unleſs they can find out ſome means of hiding their deformities, not only from the eyes of others, but even from their own, and they are therefore extremely fond of every expedient that can aſſiſt them in this favourable ſelf-deception, and procure them leave to be wicked with a good character, and a good conſcience: now war is of all others the moſt effectual for this purpoſe; as it grants us a plenary indulgence for every vitious diſpoſition in the human mind exempted from all puniſhment, or even cenſure, as well as from all reluctance and remorſe: it ſo dreſſes up idleneſs and profligacy, malevolence and revenge, cruelty and injuſtice, in the amiable habit of zeal for the glory and proſperity of our country, that we can give a looſe to them all, not only with the applauſe of the world, but with the ſincere approbation of our own hearts; and of ſuch high eſtimation is this privilege, that we think it a ſufficient recompence for all the miſeries and deſolation, which the mutual exerciſe of it cannot fail to introduce.

MEN'S

MEN's zeal for religion is much of the ſame kind as that which they ſhew for a foot-ball; whenever it is conteſted for, every one is ready to venture their lives and limbs in the diſpute; but, when that is once at an end, it is no more thought on, but ſleeps in oblivion, buried in rubbiſh, which no one thinks it worth his pains to rake into, much leſs to remove.

IN religious quarrels, the propoſitions in diſpute are generally ſuch as thoſe who impoſe them cannot believe, and thoſe who reject them cannot underſtand: and therefore no one is perſecuted for not believing, but for not profeſſing to believe, when they do not; that is, for inſolently preſuming to be either wiſer, or honeſter than their perſecutors; an affront, which the ſtrongeſt ſide always extremely reſents, and ſeverely puniſhes, under the terrible denomination of obſtinate hereſy.

THE true ſcriptural meaning of the word Faith, ſeems nothing more, than a docility or promptitude to receive truth, and of Chriſtian Faith to believe the divine authority of that religion, and to obey it's precepts: in this ſenſe ſurely too much merit can never be imputed to it; but ſince this denomination has been ſo undetermined, that no two ages, nations or ſects, have affixed to it the ſame ideas, and ſo abuſed, that under it every abſurdity that knavery could cram down, or

ignorance ſwallow, have been comprehended; ſince it is ſtill capable of being ſo explained, as to mean any thing that an artful preacher pleaſes to impoſe on an illiterate audience, the laying too great a ſtreſs upon it muſt be highly dangerous to the religion and liberties of mankind: but the propoſing it as a compoſition for moral duties is of all others the moſt miſchievous doctrine; as it unhinges all our notions of divine juſtice, and eſtabliſhes wickedneſs upon a principle; and it is the more miſchievous, as it cannot fail of being popular, becauſe, as it is uſually inculcated, it is in fact nothing more than offering to the people a licence to be profligate, at the eaſy price of being abſurd; a bargain, which they will ever readily agree to.

POLITICAL TRACTS.

SHORT BUT SERIOUS

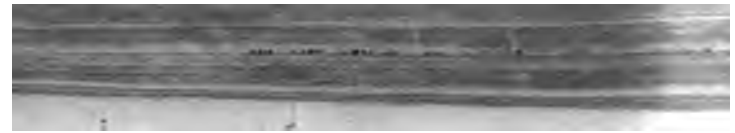
REASONS

FOR A

NATIONAL MILITIA.

Militia potior. HOR.

Written in the Year 1757.



SHORT BUT SERIOUS

REASONS

FOR A

NATIONAL MILITIA.

IN this age of levity and ridicule, it is extremely difficult to procure a ſerious attention to any propoſal, however important, or however wiſely calculated for the public benefit; but ſure if there ever was a propoſition deſerving attention from every true Engliſhman, it is this for the eſtabliſhment of a National Militia, now under the conſideration of the legiſlature; on the ſucceſs of which I ſincerely think, that our glory abroad, our ſecurity at home, and our very being as a nation, intirely depend.

So manifeſt is the truth of this to the meaneſt and moſt abſurd underſtandings, that I never met with one of that kind who has not been clearly convinced of it; to ſuch therefore I ſhall not here addreſs myſelf, but to the wiſe and ſagacious only, many of whom, to my great ſurprize, I have found

found of a very different opinion: to theſe then I ſhall endeavour to prove, in as few words as poſſible, the truth of the following propoſitions:

1ſt, That ſuch a militia may ſoon be rendered not at all inferior to our preſent regular forces.

2dly, That it will effectually ſecure our liberties, properties, and religion.

3dly, That it will ſtrengthen the hands of government.

4thly, That it will reduce the price of our proviſions, and manufactures, and extend our trade.

5thly, That it will increaſe the number of our people; and,

Laſtly, That it may be carried into execution without any expence to the public.

First, then, I ſhall endeavour to prove that a militia may very ſoon be rendered not at all inferior to our preſent regular forces: and whoever will look back on the behaviour of theſe forces for ſome years paſt both by land and ſea, will be convinced that this is no very arduous undertaking; nor be under any doubt, but that after a few days exerciſe they will behave as valiantly as our regiments at Falkirk, Preſton Pans, or Oſwego, or

our

our fleets in the Mediterranean [a]. Nor can I indeed comprehend from whence their inferiority ſhould proceed; unleſs ſtrong-beer ſhould inſpire leſs true courage than gin; or being trained in a country church-yard, produce a leſs familiarity with death than performing the ſame exerciſe in the gay ſcenes of Hyde-Park or St. James's. If it be objected that they will be deficient in military knowledge and experience; I anſwer, they will fight the better: the utility of theſe qualifications in the day of battle is a vulgar error, propagated like all others, for want of reaſoning; for all fighting being in its own nature contradictory to common ſenſe, it can never be promoted by knowledge: military knowledge therefore can never be that ſort of knowledge which enables men to fight; but that which enables them to find out good reaſons for not fighting; or if they ſhould be bad, to call in the aſſiſtance of councils of war and court-martials to make them better. Much leſs ſure will experience induce men to fight, unleſs we can believe that wounds and bruiſes, like coffee and tobacco, though diſagreeable at firſt taſting, grow pleaſant by frequent repetitions.

[a] Since the writing of this, the bravery and conduct of our regular forces, both by ſea and land, in every quarter of the globe, have been ſo unexampled, that, notwithſtanding the author's partiality for the Militia, he is candid enough to acknowledge, that he begins to have ſome ſmall doubts, whether thoſe corps may ever be able altogether to equal them.

SECONDLY,

SECONDLY, That ſuch a militia will ſecure our liberties, properties, and religion. The liberties we ſo juſtly value in this country are theſe, that every one may think and write, and ſay and do whatever he pleaſes; our properties comprehend all things of which we are in poſſeſſion, by whatever means they have been acquired; theſe can certainly no way be ſo effectually ſecured to us as by the uſe of arms, by which we may at all times defend ourſelves from the attacks of judges and juries, from writs and ejectments, from goals and pillories, with all the tyranny of juſtices, and impertinence of conſtables, grievances not to be endured in a free country. As to our religion, a ſcheme of this kind muſt have moſt ſalutary effects, ſince a bill only for its eſtabliſhment has already produced unanimity between our church divines and diſſenters in one ſenſible and pious opinion *; an event perhaps not eaſy to be remembered on any other occaſion.

THIRDLY, That it will ſtrengthen the hands of government, which in this nation being, by the conſent of all true patriots, allowed to be the ſole right of the loweſt of the people, or mob, with whom ſuch patriots wonderfully agree in their political ſentiments, what can ſo effectually ſecure to them the dominion they now exerciſe over us, as

* In oppoſing that part of it which enacted, that the Militia ſhould be exerciſed on Sundays.

putting

putting arms into their hands, and teaching them how to uſe them? This muſt certainly ſtrengthen the hands of theſe our governors, and conſequently of government itſelf.

Fourthly, It will reduce the price of our proviſions and manufactures, and extend our trade; becauſe when the good people of England are thus armed and diſciplined, they will be enabled to take away meat, corn, and malt, and all other proviſions, from foreſtallers and ingroſſers, butchers, millers, and farmers, at a reaſonable price, of which they themſelves muſt always be the beſt and moſt impartial judges. When the price of proviſions is thus happily reduced, that of our manufactures muſt inevitably fall in due proportion; and the reduction of theſe muſt as certainly carry more of them to foreign markets, and conſequently extend our trade. The truth of this has been ſo often demonſtrated by all writers on trade, and all whoſe trade is writing, that it is here needleſs to ſay any more on the ſubject.

Fifthly, That it will increaſe the number of our people: to be convinced of which, gentle reader, figure to thyſelf all the handſomeſt young fellows in every county, each armed like the hero in a romance, dreſt, powdered, and toupeed by the reforming hand of a genteel ſerjeant; then turn thy eyes to the numerous groupe of fair ſpectators

tators in Sunday gowns, and clean linen, who will not fail to attend ſo tempting a ſhow; then if thou haſt not loſt all feeling both mental and corporeal, thou canſt not doubt but that ſo much valour on one ſide, and ſo much beauty on the other, will certainly produce much mutual affection, and that this will as infallibly be the cauſe of much procreation, and in a great meaſure repair the loſſes occaſioned by our migrations to America, and the depredations of gin. If it be objected, that to balance this, many lives will be loſt by the inſtitution of theſe forces, by the accidental diſcharge of their firelocks, or the too valiant uſe of their ſwords in drunken quarrels; I anſwer, theſe accidents may ſometimes happen; but, as on the moſt moderate computation, every one in theſe corps will probably beget three children before he kills one man, it cannot fail to increaſe the number of our people. Though this good effect of this truly national ſcheme has not, that I know of, been obſerved by any author, who has undertaken to recommend it to the public, yet it has not eſcaped the quick-ſighted eyes of our ſagacious legiſlature [c], who, on this very account, have this year voted a large ſum to the Foundling Hoſpital, and propoſe to increaſe it ſtill further as ſoon as theſe national forces begin to act in the ſervice of their country.

[c] This ſeſſions the parliament voted a much greater ſum to the Foundling Hoſpital, than had ever been before thought on.

2

LASTLY,

LASTLY, That it may be carried into execution without any expence to the public, and this by a method ſo extremely obvious, that it is ſurpriſing the wiſdom of Parliament has not diſcovered it. The method I mean is no more than this: that as every man who attends on the days of exerciſe, and continues ſober, is by the preſent bill to receive ſixpence, I would have it further enacted, that every one who is drunk on thoſe days, ſhould pay the ſaid ſum of ſixpence, to be applied towards the ſupport of this national force, a very ſmall penalty, ſure, for ſo great a neglect of duty where the ſafety of his country is at ſtake. Now whoever has been preſent at a fair, a ſeſſions, a horſe-race, an aſſizes, a cricket-match, or a viſitation, or any other numerous meeting in the country, muſt know, that on the moſt enlarged computation, the number of ſober cannot exceed the proportion of one in ten of thoſe who are drunk; and there is no reaſon that I know of to ſuppoſe that the majority will be leſs on this occaſion. If ſo, the public, we ſee, will receive nine times the ſum every day that it will be required to pay, and conſequently the remaining eight parts will amply ſupply theſe forces with arms, ammunition, cloaths, and accoutrements. But if this ſhould not be found quite ſufficient, conſidering how frequently they will probably be loſt, a ſmall matter laid on oaths, many of which they will readily learn from the inſtructions of their ſerjeants, would eaſily ſupply

ſupply all deficiences; and if the landed officers of theſe corps would ſubmit to the ſame penalties, it would much increaſe the fund: but as theſe gentlemen, who are to receive nothing for being ſober, may think it hard to pay ſixpence for being drunk, I would by no means inſiſt on their being included, eſpecially as I doubt not but the ſum thus raiſed will be ſufficient to defray all expences, and totally to indemnify the public revenues.

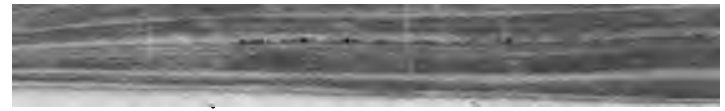
THE objections made to this ſcheme are ſo frivolous and abſurd, that they are by no means worthy of obſervation; but of one or two I will juſt take notice. It is aſſerted, that gentlemen of eſtates in the country, will never ſubmit to the duty of officers without pay; but whoever conſiders how ready theſe gentlemen are, on all occaſions, to execute the offices of juſtices of the peace, commiſſioners of taxes, and turnpikes; how earneſt to ſpend half their time, and all their eſtates, to acquire ſeats, and to attend their duty in Parliament, from whence no poſſible advantage can accrue, muſt be ſatisfied that this is but an unjuſt ſuſpicion, founded on no reaſon, and inconſiſtent with the true zeal which they have ever ſhewn in the cauſe of their country.

IT is alſo apprehended, that many of theſe gentlemen, by indolence, corpulency, age, or gout, will be rendered incapable of fighting; but the very reverſe of this is certainly true, becauſe theſe very

very infirmities will make it impoſſible for them to run away.

And now having demonſtrated the truth of every one of my propoſitions beyond the power of all miniſterial ſcribblers to diſprove, I ſhall conclude, by recommending this neceſſary ſcheme to the protection of all true lovers of their country, earneſtly wiſhing, that nothing may prevent it from being put in execution as ſoon as poſſible: then, O Britain, O my country, will I congratulate thee on the conſummation of thy proſperity, and the happy period of all thy calamities. Long have thy true patriots wiſhed to ſee thee engaged ſingly in a war with France, which, from thy natural ſuperiority, muſt always be attended with glory and ſucceſs: long haſt thou groaned under the oppreſſions of mercenary allies abroad, and rapacious miniſters at home: but at laſt the time, the happy time is arrived, when our wiſhes are all fulfilled, and our misfortunes wiped away; when we are in full poſſeſſion of ſuch a glorious war, without any allies, or any adminiſtration at all.

——quod optanti nemo promittere Divum
Auderet, volvenda Dies en attulit ultro!



THE OBJECTIONS TO THE TAXATION OF OUR AMERICAN COLONIES, BY THE Legiſlature *of* Great-Britain, BRIEFLY CONSIDERED.

Written in the Year 1765.

THE OBJECTIONS TO THE TAXATION OF OUR AMERICAN COLONIES, BRIEFLY CONSIDERED.

THE right of the legiſlature of Great-Britain to impoſe taxes on her American Colonies, and the expediency of exerting that right in the preſent conjuncture, are propoſitions ſo indiſputably clear, that I ſhould never have thought it neceſſary to have undertaken their defence, had not many arguments been lately flung out, both in papers and converſation, which with inſolence equal to their abſurdity deny them both. As theſe are uſually mixt up with ſeveral patriotic and favorite words, ſuch as Liberty, Property, Engliſhmen, &c. which are apt to make ſtrong impreſſions on that more numerous part of mankind,

who have ears but no underſtanding, it will not, I think, be improper to give them ſome anſwers: to this therefore I ſhall ſingly confine myſelf, and do it in as few words as poſſible, being ſenſible that the feweſt will give leaſt trouble to myſelf and probably moſt information to my reader.

THE great capital argument, which I find on this ſubject, and which, like an Elephant at the head of a Nobob's army, being once overthrown, muſt put the whole into confuſion, is this: that no Engliſhman is, or can be taxed, but by his own conſent: by which muſt be meant one of theſe three propoſitions; either that no Engliſhman can be taxed without his own conſent as an individual; or that no Engliſhman can be taxed without the conſent of the perſons he chuſes to repreſent him: or that no Engliſhman can be taxed without the conſent of the majority of all thoſe, who are elected by himſelf and others of his fellow-ſubjects to repreſent them. Now let us impartially conſider, whether any one of theſe propoſitions are in fact true: if not, then this wonderful ſtructure which has been erected upon them, falls at once to the ground, and like another Babel, periſhes by a confuſion of words, which the builders themſelves are unable to underſtand.

FIRST then, that no Engliſhman is or can be taxed but by his own conſent as an individual: this

this is ſo far from being true, that it is the very reverſe of truth; for no man that I know of is taxed by his own conſent; and an Engliſhman, I believe, is as little likely to be ſo taxed, as any man in the world.

SECONDLY, that no Engliſhman is, or can be taxed, but by the conſent of thoſe perſons, whom he has choſe to repreſent him; for the truth of this I ſhall appeal only to the candid repreſentatives of thoſe unfortunate counties which produce cyder, and ſhall willingly acquieſce under their determination.

LASTLY, that no Engliſhman is, or can be taxed, without the conſent of the majority of thoſe, who are elected by himſelf, and others of his fellow-ſubjects, to repreſent them. This is certainly as falſe as the other two; for every Engliſhman is taxed, and not one in twenty repreſented: copyholders, leaſeholders, and all men poſſeſſed of perſonal property only, chuſe no repreſentatives; Mancheſter, Birmingham, and many more of our richeſt and moſt flouriſhing trading towns ſend no members to parliament, conſequently cannot conſent by their repreſentatives, becauſe they chuſe none to repreſent them; yet are they not Engliſhmen? or are they not taxed?

I AM well aware, that I ſhall hear Locke, Sidney, Selden, and many other great names quoted,

to prove that every Engliſhman, whether he has a right to vote for a repreſentative, or not, is ſtill repreſented in the Britiſh parliament; in which opinion they all agree: on what principle of common ſenſe this opinion is founded I comprehend not, but on the authority of ſuch reſpectable names I ſhall acknowledge its truth; but then I will aſk one queſtion, and on that I will reſt the whole merits of the cauſe: Why does not this imaginary repreſentation extend to America, as well as over the whole iſland of Great-Britain? If it can travel three hundred miles, why not three thouſand? if it can jump over rivers and mountains, why cannot it ſail over the ocean? If the towns of Manchester and Birmingham ſending no repreſentatives to parliament, are notwithſtanding there repreſented, why are not the cities of Albany and Boſton equally repreſented in that aſſembly? Are they not alike Britiſh ſubjects? are they not Engliſhmen? or are they only Engliſhmen, when they ſollicit for protection, but not Engliſhmen, when taxes are required to enable this country to protect them?

But it is urged, that the Colonies are by their charters placed under diſtinct Governments, each of which has a legiſlative power within itſelf, by which alone it ought to be taxed; that if this privilege is once given up, that liberty which every Engliſhman has a right to, is torn from them, they are all ſlaves, and all is loſt.

The

THE liberty of an Engliſhman, is a phraſe of ſo various a ſignification, having within theſe few years been uſed as a ſynonymous term for blaſphemy, bawdy, treaſon, libels, ſtrong beer, and cyder, that I ſhall not here preſume to define its meaning; but I ſhall venture to aſſert what it cannot mean; that is, an exemption from taxes impoſed by the authority of the Parliament of Great-Britain; nor is there any charter, that ever pretended to grant ſuch a privilege to any colony in America; and had they granted it, it could have had no force; their charters being derived from the crown, and no charter from the Crown can poſſibly ſuperſede the right of the whole Legiſlature: their charters are undoubtedly no more than thoſe of all corporations, which empower them to make bye laws, and raiſe duties for the purpoſes of their own police, for ever ſubject to the ſuperior authority of parliament; and in ſome of their charters, the manner of exerciſing theſe powers is ſpecified in theſe expreſs words, "according to the courſe of other corporations "in Great-Britain:" and therefore they can have no more pretence to plead an exemption from this parliamentary authority, than any other corporation in England.

IT has been moreover alledged, that, though Parliament may have power to impoſe taxes on the Colonies, they have no right to uſe it, becauſe

becauſe it would be an unjuſt tax; and no ſupreme or legiſlative power can have a right to enact any law in its nature unjuſt: to this, I ſhall only make this ſhort reply, that if Parliament can impoſe no taxes but what are equitable, and the perſons taxed are to be the judges of that equity, they will in effect have no power to lay any tax at all. No tax can be impoſed exactly equal on all; and if it is not equal, it cannot be juſt; and if it is not juſt, no power whatever can impoſe it; by which ſhort ſyllogiſm, all taxation is at an end; but why it ſhould not be uſed by Engliſhmen on this ſide the Atlantic, as well as by thoſe on the other, I do not comprehend.

Thus much for the right. Let us now a little inquire into the expediency of this meaſure; to which two objections have been made; that the time is improper, and the manner wrong.

As to the firſt, can any time be more proper to require ſome aſſiſtance from our Colonies, to preſerve to themſelves their preſent ſafety, than when this Country is almoſt undone by procuring it? Can any time be more proper to impoſe ſome tax upon their trade, than when they are enabled to rival us in our manufactures, by the encouragement and protection which we have given them? Can any time be more proper to oblige them to ſettle handſome incomes on their governors, than when

when we find them unable to procure a ſubſiſtence on any other terms than thoſe of breaking all their inſtructions, and betraying the rights of their ſovereign? Can there be a more proper time to compel them to fix certain ſalaries on their judges, than when we ſee them ſo dependent on the humours of their aſſemblies, that they can obtain a livelihood no longer than *quam diu ſe male geſſerint?* Can there be a more proper time to force them to maintain an army at their expence, than when that army is neceſſary for their own protection, and we are utterly unable to ſupport it? Laſtly, can there be a more proper time for this mother country to leave off feeding out of her own vitals, theſe children whom ſhe has nurſed up, than when they are arrived at ſuch ſtrength and maturity as to be well able to provide for themſelves, and ought rather with filial duty to give ſome aſſiſtance to her diſtreſſes.

As to the manner; that is, the impoſing taxes on the Colonies by the authority of Parliament, it is ſaid to be harſh and arbitrary; and that it would have been more conſiſtent with juſtice, at leaſt with maternal tenderneſs, for Adminiſtration here to have ſettled quotas on each of the colonies, and have then tranſmitted them with injunctions, that the ſums allotted ſhould be immediately raiſed by their reſpective legiſlatures, on the penalty of their being impoſed by Parliament, in caſe of their

non-compliance? But was this to be done, what would be the conſequence? Have their aſſemblies ſhewn ſo much obedience to the orders of the Crown, that we could reaſonably expect, that they would immediately tax themſelves on the arbitrary command of a miniſter? Would it be poſſible here to ſettle thoſe quotas with juſtice, or would any one of the colonies ſubmit to them, were they ever ſo juſt? Should we not be compared to thoſe Roman tyrants, who uſed to ſend orders to their ſubjects to murder themſelves within ſo many hours, moſt obligingly leaving the method to their own choice, but on their diſobedience threatening a more ſevere fate from the hands of an executioner? And ſhould we not receive votes, ſpeeches, reſolutions, petitions, and remonſtrances in abundance, inſtead of taxes? In ſhort, we either have a right to tax the Colonies, or we have not: if Parliament is poſſeſſed of this right, why ſhould it be exerciſed with more delicacy in America, than it has ever been even in Great-Britain itſelf? If on the other hand, they have no ſuch right, ſure it is below the dignity as well as juſtice of the Legiſlature, to intimidate the Colonies with vain threats, which they have really no right to put in execution.

One method indeed has been hinted at, and but one, that might render the exerciſe of this power in a Britiſh Parliament juſt and legal, which is the introduction of repreſentatives from the

ſeveral

ſeveral colonies into that body; but as this has never ſeriouſly been propoſed, I ſhall not here conſider the impracticability of this method, nor the effects of it, if it could be practiſed; but only ſay, that I have lately ſeen ſo many ſpecimens of the great powers of ſpeech, of which theſe American gentlemen are poſſeſſed, that I ſhould be much afraid, that the ſudden importation of ſo much eloquence at once, would greatly endanger the ſafety and government of this country; or in terms more faſhionable, though leſs underſtood, this our moſt excellent conſtitution. If we can avail ourſelves of theſe taxes on no other condition, I ſhall never look upon it as a meaſure of frugality, being perfectly ſatisfied, that in the end, it will be much cheaper for us to pay their army, than their orators.

I CANNOT omit taking notice of one prudential reaſon, which I have heard frequently urged againſt this taxation of the Colonies, which is this; that if they are by this means impoveriſhed, they will be unable to purchaſe our manufactures, and conſequently we ſhall loſe that trade, from which the principal benefit which we receive from them muſt ariſe. But ſurely, it requires but little ſagacity to ſee the weakneſs of this argument; for ſhould the Colonies raiſe taxes for the purpoſes of their own government and protection, would the money ſo raiſed be immediately annihilated?

What

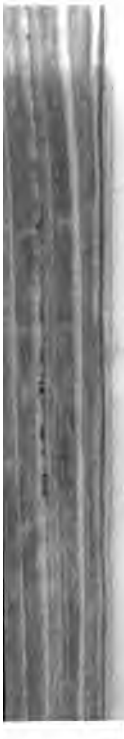
What ſome pay, would not others receive? Would not thoſe who ſo receive it, ſtand in need of as many of our manufactures, as thoſe who pay? Was the army there maintained at the expence of the Americans, would the ſoldiers want fewer coats, hats, ſhirts, or ſhoes, than at preſent? Had the judges ſalaries aſcertained to them, would they not have occaſion for as coſtly periwigs, or robes of as expenſive ſcarlet, as marks of their legal abilities, as they now wear in their preſent ſtate of dependency? Or had their governors better incomes ſettled on them for obſerving their inſtructions, than they can now with difficulty obtain for diſobeying them, would they expend leſs money in their ſeveral governments, or bring home at their return leſs riches, to lay out in the manufactories of their native country?

It has been likewiſe aſſerted, that every ſhilling which our Colonies can raiſe either by cultivation or commerce, finally centers in this country; and therefore it is argued, we can acquire nothing by their taxation, ſince we can have no more than their All; and whether this comes in by taxes or by trade, the conſequence is the ſame. But allowing this aſſertion to be true, which it is not, yet the reaſoning upon it is glaringly falſe: for ſurely it is not the ſame, whether the wealth derived from theſe colonies flows immediately into the coffers of the public, or into the pockets of individuals,

individuals, from whence it muſt be ſqueezed by various domeſtic taxes before it can be rendered of any ſervice to the nation: ſurely it is by no means the ſame, whether this money brought in by taxes enables us to diminiſh part of that enormous debt contracted by the laſt expenſive war, or whether coming in by trade it enables the merchant, by augmenting his influence together with his wealth, to plunge us into new wars and new debts for his private advantage.

From what has been here ſaid, I think that not only the right of the Legiſlature of Great-Britain to impoſe taxes on her Colonies, not only the expediency, but the abſolute neceſſity of exerciſing that right in the preſent conjuncture, has been ſo clearly, though conciſely proved, that it is to be hoped, that in this great and important queſtion, all parties and factions, or, in the more polite and faſhionable term, all connections, will moſt cordially unite; that every member of the Britiſh Parliament, whether in or out of humour with adminiſtration, whether he has been turned out becauſe he has oppoſed, or whether he oppoſes becauſe he has been turned out, will endeavour to the utmoſt of his power to ſupport this meaſure. A meaſure which muſt not only be approved by every man, who has any property or common ſenſe, but which ought to be required by every Engliſh ſubject of an Engliſh adminiſtration.

THOUGHTS



THOUGHTS

ON THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE PRESENT HIGH PRICE OF PROVISIONS.

Privatus illis cenſus erat brevis
Commune magnum.

[redacted]

THOUGHTS

ON THE

CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

OF THE

Preſent High Price of PROVISIONS.

THE high price of proviſions, and all the neceſſaries of life, is an evil ſo inconvenient to all conditions of men, and ſo intolerable to ſome, that it is not ſurpriſing that all ſhould ſuffer it with much diſcontent, and many be drove by it into deſpair, or into riots, rapine, and all kinds of diſorders. The latter, indeed, we cannot but expect, if we conſider, that the enemies of all government and ſubordination, ſo numerous in this country, will not fail to avail themſelves of this favourable opportunity, to ſpread univerſal diſſatisfaction, and inflame the minds of the people to ſeek redreſs by ſuch infamous and dangerous methods. This they endeavour, too ſucceſsfully,

to effect, by daily repreſenting in the public papers, that this calamity ariſes from the artifices of monopolizers, regraters, foreſtallers, and engroſſers, encouraged, or at leaſt connived at, by miniſters deſirous of oppreſſing the people, and parliaments unattentive to their complaints. It is hard to ſay, whether the ignorance of theſe writers, or their malevolence, is ſuperior; or, whether the abſurdity of their principles, or the miſchief of them, is the greateſt: but one may venture to affirm, that our people, notwithſtanding the preſent ſcarcity, are ſtill better fed than taught. This undoubtedly makes it neceſſary, at this time, that the true cauſes of this evil ſhould be explained to them; which, if it leſſens not their wants, may in ſome meaſure abate their ill-founded indignation.

To this end I ſhall endeavour to ſhew, as conciſely as poſſible, that the preſent high price of proviſions ariſes principally from two ſources; the increaſe of our national debts, and the increaſe of our riches; that is, from the poverty of the public, and the wealth of private individuals. From what cauſes theſe have been increaſed, and what have been the effects of that increaſe, ſhall be the ſubject of the few following pages.

It will ſurely be unneceſſary to inquire into the cauſes of the late immenſe increaſe of our national debt; whoever remembers the many millions annually

nually borrowed, funded, and expended, during the laſt war, can be under no difficulty to account for its increaſe. To pay intereſt for theſe new funds, new taxes were every year impoſed, and additional burthens laid on every comfort, and almoſt every neceſſary of life, by former taxes, occaſioned by former wars, before ſufficiently loaded. Theſe muſt unavoidably increaſe the prices of them, and that in a much greater proportion than is uſually underſtood: for a duty laid on any commodity does not only add the value of that duty to the price of that commodity, but the dealer in it muſt advance the price double or treble times that ſum; for he muſt not only repay himſelf the original tax, but muſt have compenſation for his loſſes in trade by bad debts, and loſs of intereſt by his increaſed capital. Beſides this, every new tax does not only affect the price of the commodity on which it is laid, but that of all others, whether taxed or not, and with which, at firſt ſight, it ſeems to have no manner of connection. Thus, for inſtance, a tax on candles muſt raiſe the price of a coat, or a pair of breeches; becauſe, out of theſe, all the taxes on the candles of the woolcomber, weaver, and the taylor, muſt be paid; a duty upon ale muſt raiſe the price of ſhoes; becauſe from them all the taxes upon ale drank by the tanner, leather-dreſſer, and ſhoemaker, which is not a little, muſt be refunded. No tax is immediately laid upon corn, but the price of it

muſt neceſſarily be advanced; becauſe, out of that, all the innumerable taxes paid by the farmer on windows, ſoap, candles, malt, hops, leather, ſalt, and a thouſand others, muſt be repaid: ſo that corn is as effectually taxed, as if a duty by the buſhel had been primarily laid upon it; for taxes, like the various ſtreams which form a general inundation, by whatever channels they ſeparately find admiſſion, unite at laſt, and overwhelm the whole. The man, therefore, who ſold ſand upon an aſs, and raiſed the price of it during the late war, though abuſed for an impoſition, moſt certainly acted upon right reaſons; for, though there were no new taxes then impoſed either on ſand or aſſes, yet he found by experience, that, from the taxes laid on almoſt all other things, he could neither maintain himſelf, his wife, or his aſs, as cheap as formerly; he was therefore under a neceſſity of advancing the price of his ſand, out of which alone all the taxes which he paid muſt be refunded. Thus I think it is evident beyond all doubt, that the increaſe of taxes muſt increaſe the price of every thing, whether taxed or not; and that this is one principal cauſe of the preſent extraordinary advance of proviſions, and all the neceſſaries of life.

The other great ſource, from whence this calamity ariſes, is certainly our vaſt increaſe of riches; the cauſes and conſequences of which, I will now briefly

briefly conſider. That our riches are in fact amazingly increaſed within a few years, no one, who is in the leaſt acquainted with this country, can entertain a doubt: whoever will caſt his eyes on our public works, our roads, our bridges, our pavements, and our hoſpitals, the prodigious extenſion of our capital, and in ſome proportion that of every conſiderable town in Great-Britain; whoever will look into the poſſeſſions and expences of individuals, their houſes, furniture, tables, equipages, parks, gardens, cloaths, plate, and jewels, will find every where round him ſufficient marks to teſtify to the truth of this propoſition. This great increaſe of private opulence is undoubtedly owing to the very ſame cauſe which increaſed our national debt; that is, to the enormous expences and unparalleled ſucceſs of the late war; and indeed very much ariſes from that very debt itſelf. Every million funded is in fact a new creation of ſo much wealth to individuals, both of principal and intereſt; for the principal being eaſily tranſferable, operates exactly as ſo much caſh; and the intereſt, by enabling ſo many to conſume the commodities on which taxes are laid for the payment of it, in a great meaſure produces annually an income to diſcharge itſelf. Of all the enormous ſums then expended, little beſides the ſubſidies, granted to German princes, was loſt to the individuals of this country, though the whole was irrecoverably alienated from the public; all the reſt

annually returning into the pockets of the merchants, contractors, brokers, and ſtock-jobbers, enabled them to lend it again to the public on a new mortgage the following year. Every emiſſion of paper-credit by bank-notes, exchequer and navy bills, ſo long as they circulate, anſwers all the purpoſes of ſo much additional gold and ſilver as their value amounts to: if we add to theſe the immenſe riches daily flowing in ſince that period from our commerce, extended over every quarter of the globe, from the new channels of trade opened with America, and the amazing ſums imported from the Eaſt Indies, it will not ſure be difficult to account for the opulence of the preſent times, which has enabled men to increaſe their expences, and carry luxury to a pitch unknown to all former ages.

The effects of this vaſt and ſudden increaſe of riches, are no leſs evident than their cauſe: the firſt, and moſt obvious effect of the increaſe of money, is the decreaſe of its value, like that of all other commodities; for money being but a commodity, its value muſt be relative, that is, dependant on the quantity of itſelf, and the quantity of the things to be purchaſed with it. In every country where there is great plenty of proviſions, and but little money, there proviſions muſt be cheap, that is, a great deal of them will be exchanged for a little money: on the contrary, where

where there are but little proviſions in proportion to the number of conſumers, and a great plenty of money, or what paſſes for money, there they will inevitably be dear; that is, a great deal of money muſt be given to purchaſe them. Theſe effects muſt eternally follow their cauſes in all ages and in all countries; and that they have done ſo, the hiſtory of all countries in all ages ſufficiently informs us. The value of money at the time of the Norman conqueſt, was near twenty times greater than at preſent; and it has been gradually decreaſing from that period, in proportion as our riches have increaſed: it has decreaſed not leſs than one third during the preſent century; and I believe one half at leaſt of that third ſince the commencement of the laſt war, which I doubt not, could it be exactly computed, would be found to be in due proportion to the increaſe of its quantity, either in real or fictitious caſh; and that the price of proviſions is advanced in the ſame proportion, during the ſame period.

The increaſe of money does not only operate on the price of proviſions by the diminution of its own value, but by enabling more people to purchaſe, and conſequently to conſume them; which muſt unavoidably likewiſe increaſe their ſcarcity, and that muſt ſtill add more to their price. Twenty rich families will conſume ten times as much meat, bread, butter ſoap, and candles,

candles, as twenty poor families conſiſting of the ſame number; and the prices of all theſe muſt certainly riſe in proportion to the demand. This effect of the increaſe of wealth in many countries of Europe, is very viſible at this day, and in none more than in the northern parts of this iſland, who having of late acquired riches by the introduction of trade, manufactures, and tillage, can now well afford to eat roaſt beef, and therefore conſume much of thoſe cattle, with which they were formerly glad to ſupply us; and will not part with the reſt but at prices greatly advanced. The conſumption of every thing is alſo amazingly increaſed from the increaſe of wealth in our metropolis, and indeed in every corner of this kingdom; and the manner of living, throughout all ranks and conditions of men, is no leſs amazingly altered: the merchant who formerly thought himſelf fortunate, if in a courſe of thirty or forty years, by a large trade and ſtrict œconomy, he amaſſed together as many thouſand pounds, now acquires in a quarter of that time double that ſum, or breaks for a greater, and vies all the while with the firſt of our nobility, in his houſes, table, furniture, and equipage: the ſhop-keeper, who uſed to be well contented with one diſh of meat, one fire, and one maid, has now two or three times as many of each; his wife has her tea, her card-parties, and her dreſſing-room; and his prentice has climbed from the kitchen-fire to the front-boxes

at

at the play-houſe. The loweſt manufacturer and meaneſt mechanic will touch nothing but the very beſt pieces of meat, and the fineſt white bread; and, if he cannot obtain double the wages for being idle, to what he formerly received for working hard, he thinks he has a right to ſeek for a redreſs of his grievances, by riot and rebellion. Since then the value of our money is decreaſed by its quantity, our conſumption increaſed by univerſal luxury, and the ſupplies, which we uſed to receive from poorer countries, now alſo grown rich, greatly diminiſhed, the preſent exorbitant price of all the neceſſaries of life can be no wonder.

From what has been here offered, I think this may be readily accounted for, without having recourſe to foreſtallers, regraters, engroſſers, monopolizers, higglers, badgers, bounties, poſt-chaiſes, turnpike-roads, enlarging of farms, and the extenſion of the metropolis, with all that ridiculous catalogue of cauſes, which have been aſſigned by eſſay-writers to this evil, and frequently adopted by the abſurdity of their readers. How far all or any of theſe have accidentally, collaterally, or locally contributed to augment the price of proviſions, I cannot determine, nor do I think it of much importance to inquire; becauſe I am ſatisfied, whatever may have been their effects, they could have had none at all, had they not been aſſiſted by the firſt and great cauſe, the increaſe

increaſe of riches; for no artifices of traders can make their commodities dear in a poor country; that is, ſell things for a great deal of money, where there is little to be found. It ſeems therefore to no purpoſe, to ſearch out for cauſes of the preſent high price of proviſions, from facts, whoſe operations are uncertain, and reaſons at beſt but ſpeculative, when it is ſufficiently accounted for from theſe two great principles, the increaſe of taxes, and the increaſe of riches, principles as abſolutely indiſputable, and as demonſtrable as any mathematical problem.

I SHALL now make ſome curſory obſervations and ſhort concluſions on the principles here advanced, which, allowing theſe to be true, can admit of no doubt. Firſt then, although the price of proviſions is at preſent very high, they cannot with propriety be ſaid to be dear. Nothing is properly dear, except ſome commodity, which, either from real or fictitious ſcarcity, bears a higher price than other things in the ſame country, at the ſame time. In the reign of Henry II. the value of money was about fifteen times greater than in the preſent age: a fowl then was ſold for a penny, which cannot now be bought under fifteen pence; but fowls are not for that reaſon dearer now, than they were at that time: becauſe one penny was then earned with as much labour, and when earned would fetch as much of every thing

thing at market, as fifteen will in theſe days: was the value of money now as great, and the price of other things as ſmall, as in theſe times, and proviſions bore the ſame price as at preſent, they would then be dear indeed, and the pamphleteers would have good reaſon to impute their dearneſs to the frauds of engroſſers and monopolizers; but as the price of every thing beſides, of houſes, furture, cloaths, horſes, coaches, fees, perquiſites, and votes, are all equally advanced; nay, as every pamphlet, which uſed to be ſold for one ſhilling, has now inſcribed on its title-page, price eighteen-pence, their own works are a confutation of their arguments; for nonſenſe is a commodity in which there are too many dealers ever to ſuffer it to be monopolized or engroſſed. It is certainly therefore improper to ſay that proviſions are dear, but we ſhould rather affirm, what is the real fact, that money is cheap; and if the complainants would uſe this expreſſion inſtead of the other, and at the ſame time conſider, that this ariſes from the ſucceſs of our arms, and the extenſion of our trade, I am perſuaded, that if they were not leſs diſtreſſed, they would certainly be leſs diſſatisfied, and would, perhaps, by degrees, comprehend, that, in a country engaged in expenſive wars and ſucceſsful commerce, there muſt be heavy taxes, and great riches; and that where there are taxes and riches, there the prices of proviſions, and all other things, muſt be high, in ſpite of all the efforts of miniſters or parliaments, who ought by

no means to be blamed, for not effecting impoſſibilities, and counteracting the nature of things.

Secondly, this cheapneſs of money in its conſequences affects different conditions of men in a very different manner; to ſome it operates exactly in the ſame manner as real dearneſs and ſcarcity, at the ſame time that to others it gives conſiderable advantages. All thoſe who ſubſiſt on ſettled ſtipends, muſt inevitably be ruined by it: merchants, and traders of all kinds, are greatly benefited; but the labourer and the land-owner are moſt grievouſly oppreſſed. Thoſe who ſubſiſt on ſettled ſtipends muſt be ruined; becauſe, if their incomes cannot be advanced in proportion to the decreaſe of the value of money, and the conſequent increaſe of the prices of every thing, the ſame nominal ſum which would afford affluence in one age, will not prevent ſtarving in another; of which we have numerous examples in our ſchools, colleges, alms-houſes, and other charitable foundations. Merchants and traders are conſtantly gainers by it; becauſe they can always raiſe the prices of whatever they deal in, faſter than the value of money decreaſes: but the labourer, having nothing to ſubſiſt on but his daily work, muſt ever be behind-hand in advancing the price of his labour; becauſe he is not able to wait till it acquires its due proportion of value, and therefore by it he muſt ſuffer extremely. The land-owner

land-owner likewiſe cannot raiſe his rents in any proportion to the fall of the value of money; becauſe the charges of cultivation, the family-expences of the occupiers, and the maintenance of an increaſing poor, all burthens inſeparable from his land, muſt all riſe in proportion to that fall; and theſe muſt perpetually retard his progreſs. The price of labour and of land muſt by degrees advance, as money decreaſes in value; but, as theſe are the laſt that will feel its effects, the labourer muſt, in the mean time, be miſerably pinched, and the land-owner dreadfully impoveriſhed by it. This is not ſpeculation, but a fact which is too well verified by experience at this time, through every part of this kingdom, where the labourer, with his utmoſt induſtry, cannot now procure a belly-full for himſelf and his family; and, notwithſtanding all the late improvements in agriculture, the very ſame eſtates in land which formerly maintained a large family in ſplendor and hoſpitality, can now ſcarce repair and pay window-tax for a ſpacious manſion-houſe, and ſupply the owner of it with the neceſſaries of life. When I hear a merchant, contractor, or broker calling out for war, arguing for new loans and new taxes, I wonder not, becauſe I know that they are enriched by them, and I know alſo that they have ſagacity enough to know it too: but when I hear a landed gentleman talk the ſame language, when I ſee him eager for war, which muſt

muſt involve him in new diſtreſſes, encouraging loans, whoſe intereſt he muſt pay, pleading for taxes, which muſt lie an eternal mortgage upon his eſtate, exulting in acquiſitions of territories and commerce, which muſt daily increaſe his expences, and diminiſh his income, and triumphing in victories which muſt undo him, I own I am ſurpriſed, but at the ſame time rejoice to find, that, in this enlightened age, there is ignorance ſtill left amongſt us, ſufficient to produce ſo diſintereſted a patriot.

Lastly, from the foregoing premiſes one conſequence evidently appears, which ſeems to have eſcaped the ſagacity of our wiſeſt politicians, which is, that a nation may, nay muſt inevitably be ruined, who every year increaſes her debts, notwithſtanding her acquiſitions by conqueſt or commerce bring in double or treble the ſums which ſhe is obliged to borrow: and this by a chain of cauſes and conſequences, which the efforts of no human power or wiſdom are able to diſunite. New debts require new taxes; and new taxes muſt increaſe the price of proviſions: new acquiſitions of wealth, by decreaſing the value of money, ſtill aggravate this evil, and render them ſtill dearer; this dearneſs of proviſions muſt augment the price of labour; this muſt advance the price of all manufactures; and this muſt deſtroy trade; the deſtruction of trade muſt ſtarve the

poor,

poor, expel the manufactures, and introduce univerſal bankruptcy, riot, and confuſion. Artificers of all kinds will, by degrees, migrate into cheaper countries: the number of clergy, whoſe education muſt grow more expenſive, and incomes leſs valuable, will be inſufficient for parochial duty: the pay of navies and armies muſt be augmented, or they will no longer defend a country which cannot maintain them; but rather themſelves become her internal and moſt dangerous enemies.

From what has been here ſaid, I think it plainly appears, that the preſent exorbitant price of proviſions, and all the neceſſaries of life, chiefly ariſes from the increaſe of our taxes, and of our riches; that is, from public poverty and private opulence, the fatal diſeaſe which has put a period to all the greateſt and moſt flouriſhing empires of the world: their deſtructive effects have been ſufficiently known in all ages; but the remedy ſucceſsfully to be applied to them, is yet a ſecret. No acquiſition of foreign wealth can be effectual for this purpoſe: was our whole national debt to be at once paid off, by the introduction of all the treaſures of the Eaſt, it would but accelerate our deſtruction; for ſuch a vaſt and ſudden influx of riches would ſo enhance our expences, and decreaſe the value of money, that we ſhould at once be overwhelmed with luxury and want. The moſt conciſe method of cure would be to take ſuperabundant wealth from individuals, and

with it diſcharge the debts of the public; but here juſtice, liberty, and law, would obſtruct our progreſs with inſurmountable difficulties. Whoever therefore would attempt this ſalutary, but arduous undertaking, muſt not begin by extirpating engroſſers and regraters, nor by deſtroying rats and ſparrows, thoſe great foreſtallers of the public markets; but by gradually paying off that debt, not only by œconomy, but by the moſt avaritious parſimony, and as far as poſſible, by narrowing thoſe channels, through which riches have flowed in ſuch torrents into the pockets of private men: he muſt be deaf to all mercantile application for opening new inlets of commerce at the public expence; he muſt boldly reſiſt all propoſitions for ſettling new colonies upon parliamentary eſtimates; and moſt carefully avoid entering into new wars: in ſhort, he muſt obſtinately refuſe to add one hundred thouſand pounds to the national debt, though by that means millions could be introduced through the hands of individuals. How far theſe meaſures are practicable; or conſiſtent with the honour, dignity, or even advantage of this country in other reſpects, I cannot determine; but this I will venture to affirm, that by no others this calamity, ſo loudly and ſo juſtly at this time complained of, can ever be redreſſed.

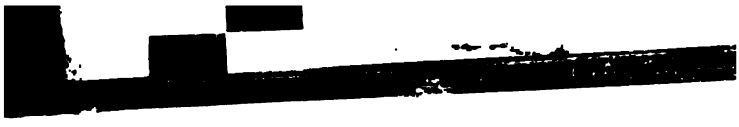
By what has been here thrown out, I would by no means be underſtood to mean to diſcourage the

the legiſlature from inquiring into abuſes, of which I doubt not but there are many, and applying to them the moſt efficacious and ſpeedy remedies; much leſs to diſapprove the ſalutary meaſures they have already taken to redreſs this evil, the wiſeſt, and perhaps the only ones which are practicable for that end. I propoſe only to leſſen the unreaſonable expectations many have formed of their ſucceſs, and the indignation conſequent from their diſappointment; and to ſtem a little thoſe torrents of abſurdities, with which one is overwhelmed in all companies both male and female. Every politician at a coffee-houſe has a noſtrum for this diſeaſe, which he pronounces infallible; and abuſes adminiſtration for not immediately adopting it. Projectors every day hold forth ſchemes unintelligible and impracticable; for not executing which, government is arraigned; the ignorant ſupport them, the factious make uſe of them, and oppoſitions, knowing what it is to be hungry, pathetically bewail the miſeries of the poor. The dowager at the quadrille-table inveighs loudly againſt the cruelty of parliament, for diſregarding the voice of the people, and ſuffering proviſions to continue at ſo exorbitant a price; calls a king; and if ſhe happens to be beaſted, grows more outrageous againſt the miniſtry; while the ſilent old general, her unfortunate partner, in three ſentences recommends military execution on all butchers, bakers, poulterers, and fiſhmongers, as the moſt equitable and moſt effectual remedy. Were theſe

impertinences productive of no miſchief, they would be only ridiculous, and unworthy of a ſerious confutation; but as

Hæ nugæ ſeria ducunt
In mala;

as they tend to deceive, to diſappoint, and to exaſperate the minds of the vulgar, and to leave thoſe of their betters diſcontented, and diſſatisfied with government; whatever ſhall explain the true and fundamental cauſes of this calamity to the people, and give ſome check to the nonſenſe, which is every where wrote, talked, and propagated on this ſubject, is an attempt, which may render great and important ſervice both to the ſocial and the political world.

FINIS.

RK PUBLIC LIBRARY
E DEPARTMENT
no circumstances to be
m the Building